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back to the BASICS

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Back in 1993, we compiled those popular *Basic Japanese* columns from the first 24 issues in book form, and called it *Basic Japanese Through Comics*. Thousands of readers have found it to be a wonderfully entertaining way to gain greater cultural and linguistic insights. It has proved popular with business people as well as students and teachers—fans range from hard-core Japanophiles to those whose interest is only casual.

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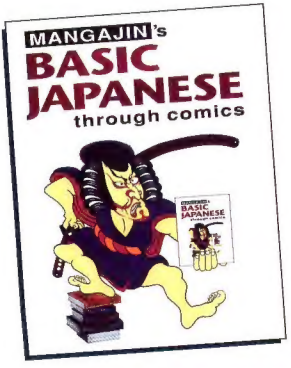

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Mangajin is a made-up word combining *manga* ("comics/cartoons") and *jin* ("person/people"). It sounds almost like the English word "magazine" as rendered in Japanese—*magajin*. All of the Japanese manga in *Mangajin* were created in Japan, by Japanese cartoonists, for Japanese readers.

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publisher's note

Back in issue No. 52, you might have noticed a half-page announcement for a symposium entitled, "A Glimpse of the Japanese Spirit through Comics," held in Tokyo in early February. The idea that manga provide "an inside look at Japan" is something that we frequently incorporate into our promotional materials for *Mangajin*, and sensing that this might be a chance to pick up some fresh copy, I asked our partner in Tokyo, Moteki-san, if he couldn't send us some kind of report on the proceedings.

The two speakers at the symposium, philosopher and social critic Tsurumi Shunsuke and Meiji Gakuin University Professor Yomota Inuhiko, are among the respected intellectuals and academics in Japan who consider manga to be a significant part of the cultural spectrum. The symposium covered quite a bit of ground—from the depiction of minorities in manga to the long tradition in Japan of combining pictures and words that led to the current manga format—but one of Prof. Yomota's observation's seemed especially noteworthy. He pointed out that works such as *Genji Monogatari* and *Makura-zōshi*, or even the entire genre of woodblock prints known as *ukiyoe,* were very much "subculture" in their day, just as manga are today. He wondered how today's manga would be perceived 100 years in the future.

Of course, that would depend a lot on the individual manga. Considering the volume of manga that comes off the presses every week, it's inevitable that much of it is simply dross that will not endure into the next week. In fact, wading through those mountains of manga to select the few that go into *Mangajin* is one of the more time-consuming parts of producing the magazine, but we are always on the lookout for gems that will be among the next century's literary classics.

Vaughan-P. Simmons

COMING UP IN MANGAJIN NO. 55

Living with Earthquakes: A year after the disastrous Kobe quake, the Japanese are more aware than ever that they live on shaky ground. Next month we take a peek at how—and whether—they are preparing for the big one.

Also: Eye on the Japanese stock market; American comics in Japan.

Manga

- *Kochira Katsushika-ku Kameari Kōen-mae Hashutsu-jo:* Officers at a Tokyo police box come face to face with a child of the information age.
- *Kono Hito ni Kakero* (Conclusion): After all she has done, will banker Harashima Hiromi finally succeed in winning the Shinwa account?
- *Kasai no Hito:* The man in the garden unwittingly provokes a quarrel between Ishimine and his wife.

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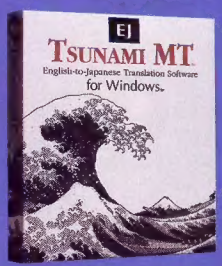

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When I started studying Japanese my approach was strictly low-tech. I would sit in my Tokyo apartment and write each kanji 50 times, and then I would do all the exercises by hand in my notebook. The only thing "wired" was the electric kotatsu that did a very poor job of keeping me warm. Likewise, when I started my publishing career as an editor at Charles E. Tuttle, we had only one photocopy machine and one electric typewriter for business correspondence. Mind you, this was not *that* long ago. But it's nice to see how the changes in technology, education, and publishing have kept pace with each other. When I started Stone Bridge Press in 1989 I was only thinking about books. Now, software is a big part of our business. Software isn't superior to books, but it's an integral part of the information "package" people want today. As a publisher, our job is to keep this "package" evolving and up to date. So last year we established our own site on the World Wide Web at ***www.stonebridge.com***. Our site is constantly "under construction," and I invite you to stop in periodically to find out what's new. If you're working in a Japanese company you can find original articles by Rochelle Kopp, author of ***The Rice-Paper Ceiling***. If you're looking for a job teaching English in Japan, you can find regular updates by Don Best, author of ***Make a Mil-¥en: Teaching English in Japan.*** You'll also find excerpts from our books and important details on system requirements for software. Our site on the Internet is publishing as much as ink on paper is publishing, except the Internet is free, open-ended, and accessible from your desktop.

NEWS This spring we've started selling ***Exotic Japan***, a sophisticated multimedia introduction to Japanese culture. Also look for Fred Schodt's new book about Japanese comics called ***Dreamland Japan: Writings on Modern Manga***. Here you'll find details about magazines, leading artists, the manga-anime link, and lots more of interest to comics fans as well as Japan watchers. And if you're a Japan walker, look for ***Sado: Japan's Island in Exile*** by Angus Waycott, the story of the author's circumambulation of this legendary island off Japan's west coast. Finally, if you want some "low-tech" approaches to language study, see this month's featured books.

Peter Goodman
Publisher

A complete list of our products and prices appeared in Mangajin issue #53. A full catalog is available upon request.

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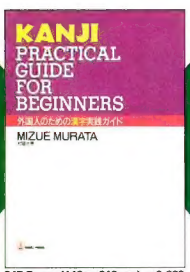

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letters

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Defining *senryū*

It's great to see that you're incorporating readers' *senryū* into *Mangajin*. There were, however, some errors (or at least disputable points) in the publisher's note where you made the announcement [*Mangajin* No. 51].

You wrote that haiku/*senryū* share a 5-7-5 form. This is true in Japanese, but not in English, especially haiku written directly in English (as opposed to translations, which sometimes keep to the 5-7-5 rule). Although there is a small group of English-language haiku writers (called "Yuki-Teki") that hold to this formula, most do not. If you check the haiku in *Frogpond*, the magazine of the Haiku Society of America, you will find almost none in this form.

One of the reasons for this is that a "syllable" in Japanese is different from one in English. In Japanese, a syllable is roughly equivalent to one kana. The word "haiku" itself is a good example. In English, this has two syllables, in Japanese three (ha-i-ku). That means that English haiku holding to the 5-7-5 formula tend to be too long and too wordy, especially when compared to their Japanese counterparts. Also, most Japanese haiku have a "cutting word" (*kireji*) that separates the sections. English-language writers often use punctuation (an ellipsis, dash, or colon) for this purpose.

Most English-language haiku writers would define a haiku as something like: "a poem, usually on three lines, with a nature theme. The poem should not contain a metaphor but may *be* a metaphor." This definition is incomplete and will be debated until Bashō comes home!

MYKEL BOARD
Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Japan job opps

In the article on bilingual job opportunities [*Mangajin* No. 52], you failed to mention Asia-Net. Asia-Net, formerly known as Japan-Net, typically has around 20 current jobs posted on the Japanese portion of their web page. I am on their mailing list and get all of their new jobs as they come out. It is really a great resource. The URL is http://www.asia-net.com.

ROBERT GREENWALD
Santa Cruz, CA

Complete thoughts

I thought Mr. Lammers [Translator's Note, *Mangajin* No. 51] would be interested in this "complete thought/sentence modifying . . ." which I found written on the menu at the chain restaurant Shirokiya:

私を選んだあなたが選んだ白木屋で選んだ素材も選んだメニューを選んだ私

Watashi o eranda anata ga eranda Shirokiya de eranda sozai mo eranda menyū o eranda watashi.

"I who selected a menu [item] made of select ingredients at the Shirokiya [restaurant] that you who selected me selected."

SIMON YATES
Osaka, Japan

漫

Netsites of the moment

Get the latest news, features, and editorials (and, in one case, political cartoons) from Japan's leading English-language newspapers.

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http://shrine.cyber.ad.jp/~jtinter/home.html

The Asahi Shimbun:
http://www.asahi.com/english/english.html

The Mainichi Daily News:
http://www.mainichi.co.jp/index-e.html

bloopers

False advertising

In preparation for a trip to Japan, I made, with the help of my Japanese teacher, a brochure about my company in Japanese. Having purchased software which allowed me to do my own Japanese-language typesetting, I prepared the artwork and had it printed. Being short on time, I didn't have my teacher proofread it carefully for me.

Proudly presenting the Japanese brochure to a potential business partner at my first meeting with him in Japan, I discovered that there was one little problem—instead of the characters 会社概要 (*kaisha gaiyo*, "company background"), I had typed 会社概妾 (*kaisha gaishō*). There may not be a literal translation of the kanji combination, but the final character in what I had printed means "concubine." That wasn't the kind of business I was looking for!

JEAN WILCOX
El Granada, CA

Life in America

My mother and father are both immigrants from Japan. One day they went to buy milk at the local drive-in dairy. Wanting to be specific, my father asked for "one quotz [quart] milk, please." The milkman gave him *goat's* milk. My mother, proud of her English, said to the milkman, "No, one bottuh [bottle] milk." To her dismay, the milkman exchanged it for buttermilk. My dad said with a sigh, "One milk, please." Thereby, he was given the bottle of milk he wanted.

MARY SEKO
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Pakapakan Banku is a *chokinbako* (貯金箱), or "savings box," which is to say, a "piggy bank," although in this case it is really a "savings can." The can/bank comes in two models: the *akudai-kan* (悪代缶, "evil magistrate can") and the *ojō-kan* (お嬢缶, "spoiled rich-girl can").

悪代缶 is a play on 悪代官, which means "evil" *(aku)* "magistrate/bailiff" *(daikan)*. *Daikan* were regional representatives of the Tokugawa shogunate who had powers to collect taxes and tribute from the people, and who were oftentimes corrupt—i.e., *akudaikan*. *Ojō-kan* plays on the word *ojōsan* (お嬢さん), which literally means "young lady" and can be a polite way to refer to someone else's daughter, but is often used to refer to a type of young lady who is wealthy, spoiled, and rather demanding.

Passing in front of one of these sensor-outfitted cans sets off a major racket—the lid flaps up and down (hence *pakapakan—paka* is the sound of a lid opening) and the can starts barking for money. The *akudai-kan* says,

「これ、これ、これ！そこの者、貢ぎ物はどういたした？」
"Kore, kore, kore! Soko no mono, mitsugimono wa dō itashita?!"
"Hey, hey, hey! You there! What about your tribute?!"

If you ignore him, he hurls insults:

「このうつけ者めが！」
"Kono utsukemono-me ga!"
"This fool!" → "You fool!"

If you oblige him, he shows his gratitude in Edo-period *akudaikan*-speak, with a conspiratorial

「お主もワルよのう。」
"Onushi mo waru yo nō."
"You're bad, too." → "You're as evil as I am. Heh heh heh."

The *ojō-kan* cajoles you into sharing your wealth, as only an *ojō-kan* can. Sensing a sucker, she squeals,

「ちょうだい、ちょうだい、ちょうだい、お・か・ね。」
"Chōdai, chōdai, chōdai, o-ka-ne."
"Please, oh please, oh please. [Give me some] mo-o-o-ney."

A refusal puts her in the worst of sulky moods:

「もういや！いじわるぅ！」
"Mō iya! Ijiwarū!"
"Oh, pooh! You're so mean!"

whereas a simple coin or two can make her day:

「超うれしー！」
"Chō ureshii!"
"[I'm] super happy!" → "All right!!"

—or at least keep her content until you're stupid enough to cross her path again.

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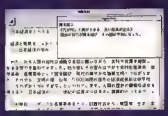

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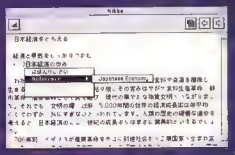

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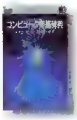

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肩たたき
Kata-tataki
いずれわが身か
izure wagami ka
人事部長
jinji buchō

A tap on the shoulder
sooner or later—will it be me?
The personnel director.

by Y. Tokuda
Tokyo

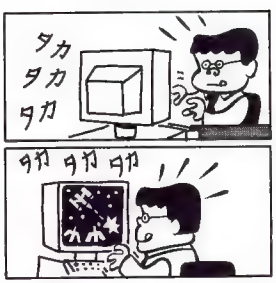
- *kata-tataki* (lit., "shoulder tapping") is the expression used when a company lets an employee know that he is being demoted or let go for one reason or another.
- *izure* means "one of these days/sooner or later/in due course."
- *waga* means "my" and *mi* here means "fate/lot"; *wagami* = "my lot."
- the *jinji buchō* ("personnel director") is a very powerful person in a Japanese company, and it is generally he who makes the decisions regarding *kata-tataki*. That his position would be in the same jeopardy as anybody else's is a reflection on the current climate of "restructuring" in corporate Japan.

- *jitsuryoku* refers to "ability/competence"; *jitsuryoku no nai hito* = "person/people with no ability."
- *naze ka* at the beginning of a phrase or sentence means "for some reason ～" or "I don't know why, but ～."
- *isogashii* means "busy," and *-sō* attached to the stem of an adjective gives the meaning "seem ～" → *isogashisō* = "seem busy."
- *taka no tsume* ("hawk's talons") is a reference to the saying *nō aru taka wa tsume kakusu* (能ある鷹は爪かくす, "The hawk with ability hides its talons"), which means that someone with true strength or ability doesn't flaunt it.

実力が
Jitsu-ryoku ga
ない人なぜか
nai hito naze ka
忙しそう
isogashisō

For some reason
those with no ability
always look busy.

by 鷹の爪 *(Taka no tsume)*
"Hawk Talons"



三流と
Sanryū to
いわれた政治が
iwareta seiji ga
一龍に
ichiryū ni

Politics,
once called "sanryū,"
now "IchiRyū."

by 古河川柳人 *(Koga senryūjin)*
"The Senryū Man from Koga"

- *sanryū* means "third rate," and *ichiryū* (written 一流) means "first rate." It is a saying in Japan that the political sector is "third rate" while the economic sector is "first rate."
- There is a pun in the writing of *ichiryū*, which combines the *ichi* (一) from Ozawa Ichirō (小沢一郎) and the *ryū* (龍) from Hashimoto Ryūtarō (橋本龍太郎). Ozawa and Hashimoto recently gained control of their respective parties to become the two most powerful politicians in Japan, so this is indeed the 一龍 era in politics. Whether their forthright brand of politics will also be judged 一流 remains to be seen.
- *to iwareta* is the past passive form of *to iu*, which between two nouns makes the first a modifier of the second: A *to iu* B = "B that is described as/called A."

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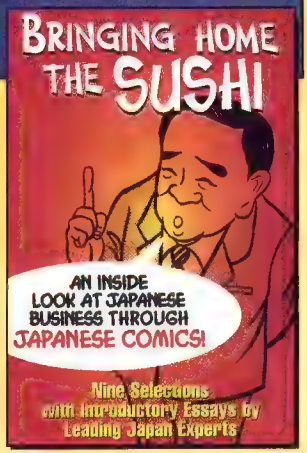
— E. Barry Keehn,
HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW


BRINGING HOME THE SUSHI
AN INSIDE LOOK AT JAPANESE BUSINESS THROUGH JAPANESE COMICS!
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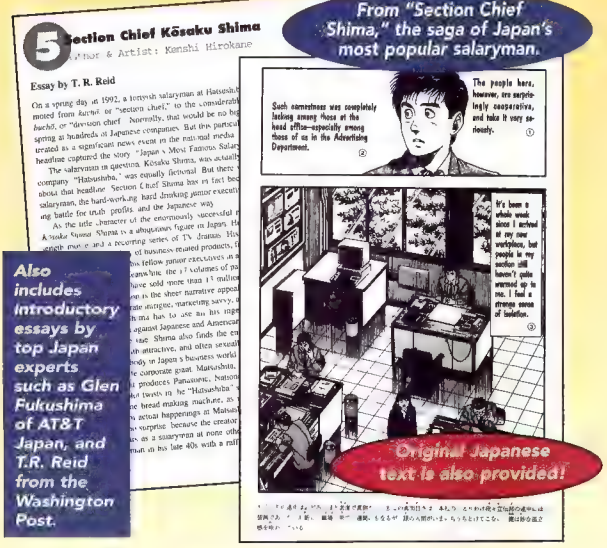
From "Section Chief Shima," the saga of Japan's most popular salaryman.
5 Section Chief Kōsaku Shima
Author & Artist: Kanshi Hirokane
Essay by T. R. Reid
Such earnestness was completely lacking among those at the head office—especially among those of us in the Advertising Department.
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It's been a whole week since I arrived at my new workplace, but people in my section still haven't quite warmed up to me. I feel a strange sense of isolation.
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political cartoon

In 1983, a subcommittee of the Japanese Ministry of Health and Welfare met to discuss whether Japan's use of unheated blood products was putting hemophiliacs at risk for AIDS, and, if so, whether Japan should begin emergency imports of safer, heat-treated blood products from the US. According to the approximately 1,800 hemophiliacs who became infected with HIV from tainted blood products after the ministry decided against emergency imports, the ministry made a wrong and negligent decision. Many of these victims are now suing the government as well as the pharmaceutical companies that continued to use unheated blood products until 1985, when heat-treated blood products were approved in Japan.

Through the years, the ministry has held fast to its claim that it didn't know the unheated products were unsafe. Then, in February of this year, certain key ministry documents from 1983 were disclosed. The documents show that the subcommittee knew the risks and had actually formulated a plan to import the safer products from the US, but reversed itself one week later. Why? Some believe that it was to protect domestic manufacturers, which lagged behind foreign makers in the development of heat-treated blood products.

In this February 23 cartoon by Yamada Shin, Kan Naoto, the current health minister and the first to admit the ministry's responsibility in this tragedy, wonders whether the people can hope for a little more honesty from the Japanese government in the future.

Injection:

エイズ　資料　公表
Eizu　*shiryō*　*kōhō*
AIDS　data/materials　proclamation/publication
Public disclosure of AIDS documents

On doctor's shirt:

管
Kan
Kan
(name)

On patient's shirt:

厚生
Kōsei
Welfare
Ministry of Health and Welfare

Doctor:

さあ…？
Sā…
I wonder…

あれで"ひた隠し"体質が変わりますか？
山田　紳

Caption:

あれ　で　"ひた隠し"　体質　が　変わりますか？
Are　*de*　*"hita kakushi"*　*taishitsu*　*ga*　*kawarimasu*　*ka?*
That　with　hiding/covering up　character/constitution　(subj.)　change　(?)
Will his intensely secretive constitution change with that?
Will that cure him of his penchant for secrecy?

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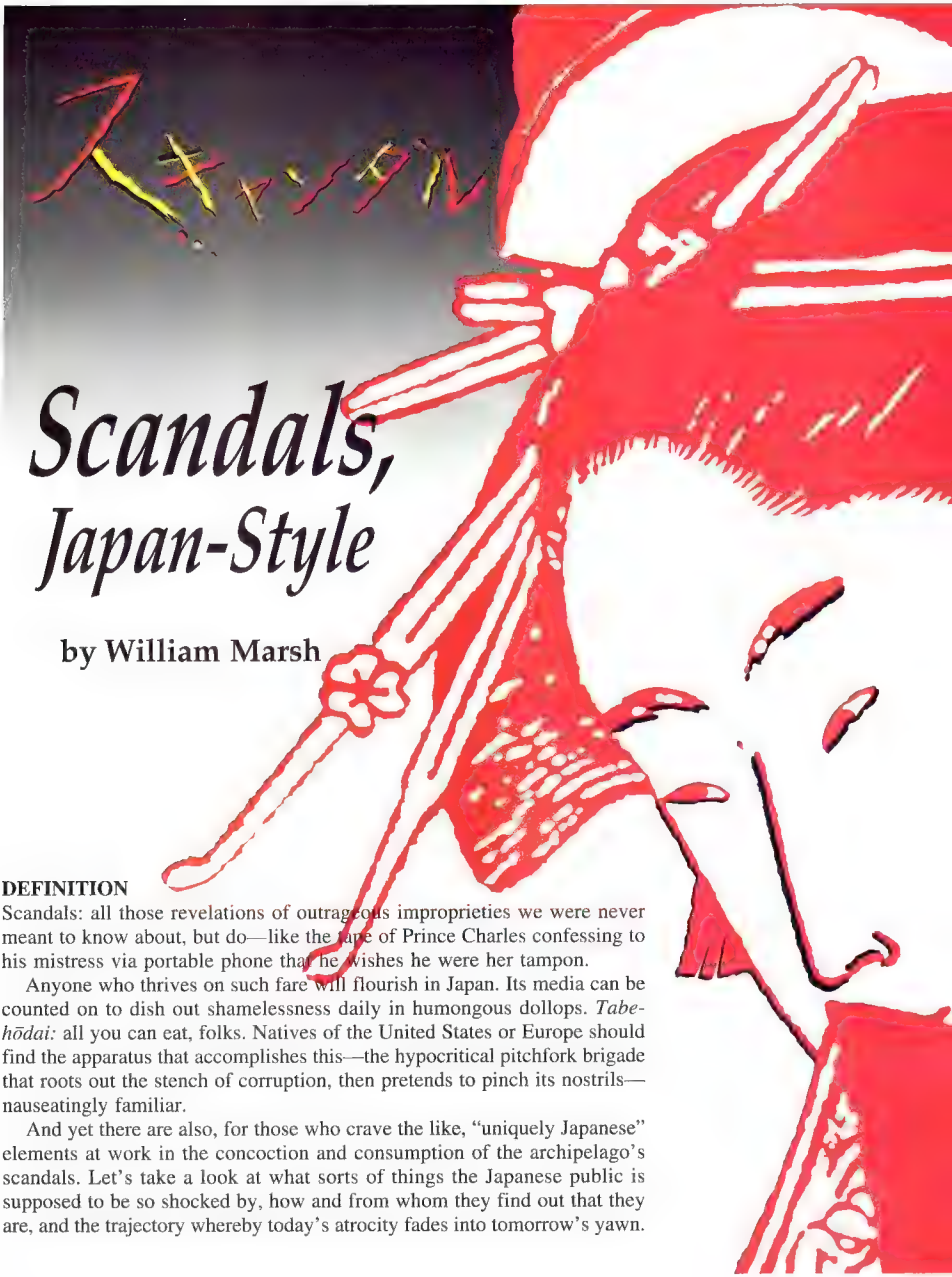

Scandals, Japan-Style

by William Marsh

DEFINITION

Scandals: all those revelations of outrageous improprieties we were never meant to know about, but do—like the farce of Prince Charles confessing to his mistress via portable phone that he wishes he were her tampon.

Anyone who thrives on such fare will flourish in Japan. Its media can be counted on to dish out shamelessness daily in humongous dollops. *Tabe-hōdai:* all you can eat, folks. Natives of the United States or Europe should find the apparatus that accomplishes this—the hypocritical pitchfork brigade that roots out the stench of corruption, then pretends to pinch its nostrils—nauseatingly familiar.

And yet there are also, for those who crave the like, "uniquely Japanese" elements at work in the concoction and consumption of the archipelago's scandals. Let's take a look at what sorts of things the Japanese public is supposed to be so shocked by, how and from whom they find out that they are, and the trajectory whereby today's atrocity fades into tomorrow's yawn.

SEX, SUICIDE, STUPIDITY: THE USUAL SIDESHOW

As the pageantry of scandals goes, for sheer "uniquely Japanese" quirkiness, it's hard to beat a tiny irruption that broke out in 1976 on the periphery of a much larger event, the Lockheed scandal. At the time, journalists worldwide had Watergate on the brain. After an American congressional committee revealed in February that the Lockheed Corporation had paid bribes to Japanese politicians to assure that a certain civil airline would buy Lockheed planes, even the see-no-evil monkeys of the "press clubs" who cover politics in Japan cried for blood. Having no choice, the authorities then tried to force Kodama Yoshio—former Class-A war criminal and cellmate of Sasakawa Ryōichi—to testify about his bagman activities for ex-Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei. They hit the usual snag: Kodama, said his doctor, had developed a "medical condition" that prevented him from leaving his mansion. Reporters camped outside and twiddled their thumbs, which they're used to doing, since covering powerful people making major decisions in Japan usually involves photographing said parties entering or leaving a building into which the media is never invited.

Suddenly the buzz of a tiny plane was heard. The reporters on duty stared in disbelief as it drew a bead on Kodama's mansion and dived. Unable to see over the wall, many did not know at first that the suicide pilot had missed his mark and that debris had landed in the pond that was home to Kodama's multimillion-dollar collection of rare carp.

The dead man, it turned out, had been a porno actor who specialized in portraying kamikaze pilots enjoying their last nights on earth. He'd dressed himself in kamikaze regalia and had himself photographed cheerily waving goodbye. The attempt to eliminate Kodama was alleged to have something to do with saving Japan, protecting its purity, what you will.

Within hours, this noble act had earned the moron who perpetrated it five-inch-tall headlines on the front page of every Japanese sports newspaper, as he'd known it would. A month later, readers who'd exclaimed "*Sugoi!*" ("Far out!") while reading about the event could barely recall that it had ever happened.

Whether one would dub the dive bomber's dubious feat a "scandal" is an open question. But as a wacky distraction perpetrated by a self-destructive narcissist aided and abetted by vicarious voyeurs passing themselves off as journalists, it's painfully typical of the junk which gobbles up space in Japan's media—space that might otherwise go to probing coverage of the admittedly boring scandals involving systemic corruption which cost Japanese taxpayers billions but might offend advertisers and media monitors in the government.

photo by William Marsh

Covers and front pages luridly blare forth the latest riches of embarrassment.

TWO TYPES OF DIRT

In Japan, there are two basic scandal scenarios. The Lockheed affair is typical of the first kind: scandals that involve an individual or individuals from the power elite so inept, unlucky, or unpopular that they get caught with hands in the till or pants down. According to this scenario, the hapless quarries must then be hounded and, in rare cases, even prosecuted—for engaging in activities that the corporate and business elite (and most citizens) are prone to regard as standard operating procedure. Despite the fact that in a sense their only real crime was getting caught, the miscreants are excoriated as pariahs and reprobates over the short term, silently do their time if that is what it takes, and then, if they've gone through all the required motions of demonstrating "remorse" but haven't squealed on their peers, reemerge, magically purged of all taint, like a ballplayer who had a bad season but is back in shape.

The second scandal format involves the hopefully juicier, more humiliating sins and slip-ups of entertainers, jocks, or kooks with claims to fame. An unwritten law states that by voluntarily stepping into the limelight, these brash beings have forfeited all claims to privacy. The media and the average citizen therefore assume the right to be as pitiless with them as the Aztecs were with the beautiful youth they'd select each year to serve as the tribe's living god and ruler. The Aztecs

• humongous = 巨大な *kyodai na* • hypocritical = 偽善的な *gizen-teki na* • pitchfork = 〔干し草用の〕フォーク／三つまた *(hoshikusa yō no) fōku/mitsumata* • pitchfork brigade = 暴徒の軍団／〔リンチに走る〕怒った群衆の一団 *bōto no gundan/(rinchi ni hashiru) ikatta gunshū no ichidan* • stench = 悪臭 *akushū* • nauseatingly = むかつくほど *mukatsuku hodo* • trajectory = 曲線／軌路 *kyokusen/keiro* • snag = 障害／行き止まり *shōgai/ikidomari* • twiddle one's thumbs = 退屈しのぎをする *taikutsu-shinogi o suru* • regalia = 装束 *shōzoku* • perpetrate = 犯罪を〔犯す *(hanzai o) okasu* • voyeur = のぞき趣味の人 *nozoki shumi no hito* • quarry = 獲物 *emono* • excoriate = 罵倒する *batō suru* • reprobate = 無頼漢 *buraikan*

Political scandals in Japan consist primarily of government officials getting caught doing business as usual. Here, a top bureaucrat is put under arrest for accepting bribes.

• acclamation = 拍手喝采 *hakushu kassai* • burp = げっぷする *geppu suru* • schizoid = 多重人格の *tajū jinkaku no*

would patiently wait until the year was up, then cut the youth's heart out in a public ritual.

Before displaying some of the organs that the Japanese media has recently removed and set on spikes in the public square of morning television, let us mull the tribal origins of celebrity massacre by acclamation in Japan.

EVERYONE CAN HEAR YOU SCREAM

Until fairly recently, Japan consisted largely of towns and villages in which most inhabitants spent their nights clumped together in thin-walled dwellings where they could hear their neighbors burp, and vice versa. Only after World War II did wondering what the family next door thought about you become necessary. Before that, if you stopped talking, you could overhear it.

The density of the petri dishes in which the common folks were enchambered bred that oddly schizoid mixture—spontaneous self-denial and vicious, voyeuristic curiosity—that today's housewife addicts of muckraking daytime TV shows still display. The difference between then and now is that the commoners of the pre-TV era had to be terribly careful about whom they vented on, since they depended for their very survival on neighbors, large numbers of whom were also relatives.

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Society provided a safety valve. Cordoned off from the tightly packed, morally exalted, and economically exploited peasant throngs were the *nagaremono* ("drifters") of the *ukiyo* ("floating world"): the theatrical troupes, promoters and sharpsters, pimps, whores, and geisha who lived out the fluid spectacle of their lives for the contemplation of the constipated masses. Officially, these folks were beneath contempt, tawdry nobodies, pathetic shooting stars—but they were the only show in town, and they knew it.

Virtually nothing has changed.

MODES OF TRANSMISSION

So who cries havoc and unleashes the hounds?

When it comes to the kind of authoritative innuendo and titillating tattling that leaves lasting scars, the mother of us all is probably a magazine named *Josei Jishin* ("Woman Herself"), although its nearly indistinguishable clone, *Josei Sebun* ("Woman Seven"), also gets quite up-close and nasty.

Inevitably quicker to track the immediate scent of an unfolding event (since they are freshly spewed from the tube each morning) are the "Wide Shows," most of which begin with the tiniest snippets of video (usually a mired celebrity in dark glasses muttering "no comment") that are then run in endless slow-motion loops while the host relies on guest experts and celebrities to stretch the "analysis" of same to fill the allotted time slot. The wide shows are as tireless (and tiresome) as Oliver Stone watching President Kennedy's head explode through back-to-back viewings of the Zapruder film.

Nipping at the heels of the "Wide Shows" in this mongrel procession are the "sports newspapers" with their screamingly misleading five-inch headlines, porno pictorials, illustrated ads for sexual services and loan sharks, and reportage that ascribes equally dire import to horses, pro wrestlers, muff shots, snuff shots, Sharon Stone, and schoolgirls with whips. Aimed at commuting salarymen rather than housebound housewives, sports newspapers intermittently turn their flashbulbs on power struggles and legislators, but only to take cheap shots.

Fuzzy photos of celebrities entering or exiting a building with a lover is a trademark of weeklies like *Friday*. This naked woman was spotted in a doorway that slugger Ochiai Hiromitsu had exited only moments before.

Bringing up the rear (and pushing out the cleavage) are weeklies like *Friday, Focus, Shūkan Hōseki* ("Weekly Jewel"), *Asahi Geinō* ("Rising Sun Entertainment")—the list is endless. Their paparazzi dog celebs daily to snap them entering buildings with sexual partners. (The sheer number of pages filled with poorly lit, poorly focused shots of the beautiful or powerful entering or leaving their parking garages is, well, scandalous.) In a not untypical attempt to spice up the mix, the best-known weekly recently ran a convincing close-up of a spoonful of Chinese "wonder soup" that allegedly contained three human fetuses; a few pages away, the very same issue tastefully displayed the corpse of a doll-clutching child crushed in an earthquake on Sakhalin. Perhaps we should not be surprised to learn that ads which insist that drinking the blood of just-decapitated turtles will boost potency provide a key source of income to such magazines.

SCANDALS OF THE LAST DECADE: THE USUAL SUSPECTS

Scandal perception derives from the sense that propriety has been violated, but what the Japanese media perceives as taboo behavior isn't necessarily what an outsider would. Being noticed by the media in the first place verges on being an implicit social sin, and if a person isn't an exemplar of utter ordinariness, he or she is at risk.

Take Miyazawa Rie, a young Eurasian actress, whose demanding manager/mother (Japanese) appears to be commercially exploiting her daughter's beauty to compensate for the suffering her own failed marriage to a foreigner doubtless visited upon the household. Rie's headline-grabbing sins so far are that she: 1) is micromanaged by Mom; 2) posed nude (if rather demurely) for a very famous photographer, as has virtually every other up-and-coming nymphet/actress since;

• troupe = 一座 *ichiza* • sharpsters = ぺてん師 *petenshi* • pimps = （売春婦の）ひも *(baishun-fu no) himo* • constipated = 行き詰まった／沈滞した *ikizumatta/chintai shita* • tawdry = けばけばしく安っぽい *kebakebashiku yasuppoi* • innuendo = 当てこすり *atekosuri* • titillating = 刺激的な *shigeki-teki na* • tattling = 告げ口／暴露 *tsugeguchi/bakuro* • nymphet – 早熟な少女アイドル *sōjuku na shojo aidoru*

3) was betrothed to, then unceremoniously dumped by, rising sumo star Takahanada (now known as Takanohana), allegedly because the sumo powers-that-be didn't like the noisy Mom and the publicity; 4) has reacted to her unwelcome notoriety first with a suicide attempt, then by developing a closely observed eating disorder, whereby recent coverage alleges that she sees "insects on her plate."

Deep Background: So-called "half" Japanese are felt to be extraordinarily beautiful but suspect, and Rie's perceived virtues and sins derive to some extent from the complex symbolism of her ethnic identity.

Matsuda Seiko is likewise suspect for incorporating in the flesh what others only dream about. Seiko is a singer who might have been invented by Helen Gurley Brown, for she has the Cosmo Girl's sexual consumerism tinctured with economic self-interest, not to mention a certain inherent mousiness that strident makeup and a Frederick's of Hollywood-style wardrobe can't completely transform—which is her charm, of course. She remains married despite a hugely publicized affair with an American named Jeff during the year in New York she'd hoped would lead to crossover success. Women (and their magazines) either adore or despise Seiko. As a symbol of feminine indomitability and desire, she has the volatility of Liz Taylor circa 1962, when the list of husbands just grew and grew.

Agnes Chan entered Japan's teenage singer scene in the seventies as a durably cute and lovable import from Hong Kong who managed to establish herself as a regular "celebrity panelist" on the TV talk and game show scene (where the real money is). Agnes later used her earnings for serious study in North America, but what ignited a firestorm was her demand to be allowed to cart her very young child with her to the studio, where she asked production staff to look after it during moments when she faced the cameras. Volumes have been written in defense of and attacking this assertion of the rights of an affluent, famous, foreign working mother.

The father of publishing, film, and video maverick and millionaire Kadokawa Haruki started the enormous Kadokawa book-publishing empire from scratch after the war; filial bonds were so strained that he disowned Haruki, then restored his birthright, four times. Haruki jerked a lot of chains by producing teen movies of literary classics starring singer "idols"; the films became box office successes (and helped sell countless truckloads of books) while the rest of Japan's film industry was busy dying. Haruki has won poetry prizes; he has also mimicked Thor Heyerdahl by sailing rafts from Pacific islands to Japan to show how Pacific islanders could have found their way into the Japanese ethnic and cultural mix. Haruki always had too much energy to be ordinary—so when he was arrested for cocaine possession, a shocking lapse to the vast majority of Japanese, few tears were shed. A weekly recently griped that he "shows absolutely no remorse," despite facing a prison term.

A beautiful face, overbearing mother, and shocking behavior have made Miyazawa Rie a national obsession, a subject for the cameras even when she is simply getting into a car.

New religions have been sources of scandals numerous times in the last decade. When Reverend Moon's Unification Church successfully recruited the very famous actress Sakurada Junko and another female star, then married them off to strangers in one of the church's trademark mass weddings, the media buzzed for months. Another religious group, called Kōfuku no Kagaku (Institute for Research in Human Happiness), used well-known members like author Kageyama Tamio to launch a counterattack against media adversaries who dared question the synthesis of economic and spiritual well-being it promotes. (The usual reaction of skewered individuals is either to play dead or apologize; religious groups and figures are more likely to put up a fight.) The enormously rich and powerful Sōka Gakkai and its leader emeritus, Ikeda Daisuke, receive carping coverage on a weekly basis in certain magazines opposed to the sect's alleged political influence.

For those who feel the cozy relationship between the authorities (police, bureaucrats, and politicians alike) and the press clubs assigned to cover them is itself a kind of scandal, the unprecedented apology by police and media last year for blaming the wrong man in the Matsumoto sarin attack was a pleasant surprise. Investigators had urged the ever-servile media puppies to print

• mousiness = 純朴さ／垢抜けなさ *junbokusa/akanukenasa* • maverick = 一匹狼 *ippiki ōkami* • buzz = さわぐ／うわさする *sawagu/uwasa suru* • carp = けちをつける／あら捜しをする *kechi o tsukeru/arasagashi o suru* • ever-servile = 常に追従的な *tsune ni tsuishō-teki na* • eviscerate = ずたずたに裂く *zutazuta ni saku*

stories indicating that rare and potentially lethal agricultural chemicals on the suspect's premises made it almost certain that he was the perpetrator; meanwhile, they isolated the man's son (whose mother, poisoned in the gas attack, lay in a coma) and unsuccessfully attempted to terrorize him into testifying that his father had unleashed the gas. Later, when numerous Aum suspects arrested after the subway attack corroborated that their sect had gassed the Matsumoto area from a moving truck to "neutralize" three judges trying a case against them, the police and press brought themselves to say they were sorry for having publicly fingered the wrong man.

NO NEWS IS GOOD NEWS

If it is an article of faith in Japan that "the best kind of news that can leak about oneself is no news at all," then the imperial family are true believers. Delimiting the possibilities—exercising damage control before there ever is damage—is the strategy by which they live.

Let's glance briefly at a magazine for women—one that is most notable for wielding a literary chainsaw to eviscerate those it scorns —and see how this usually nasty organ

Sometimes the weeklies look a little too hard for a scandal. The headline that appeared with these photos of actress Asano Yūko with her not-famous *gaijin* friend was "Kevin Costner spends the night at Asano Yūko's house!"

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handles a story on the empress and her daughter-in-law.

To begin with, there is (of course) no interview with the principals themselves, only quotes from "a source close to the palace." The story focuses on the enigma of why, in a marriage now about to start its fourth year, no announcement of the imminent birth of an heir has been forthcoming. The source reveals that at wedding time the empress had counseled the crown princess on the topic, advising her to spend three years getting to know the nuances of her public role. She even made the young couple promise to wait; for Princess Masako to master her myriad responsibilities, a trial period was felt to be necessary. As a former diplomat, says the source, the crown princess was well able to appreciate the complexity of the task before her and to restrain her natural eagerness. The empress was also anxious that the young couple should enjoy the pleasures of early marriage together for a while. Now, however, these requirements have been satisfied, and all concerned can look forward to a splendid year during which the hoped-for development is certain to transpire. The source goes so far as to add that the young couple stood before the emperor and empress at New Year's and made their intentions regarding the matter clear, and their comments were met with delight and encouragement from the emperor and empress.

Now let's see how the same magazine treated the juiciest of recent scandals, the nuptial rites of designer/heir Kimijima Akira and TV actress Yoshikawa Towako (apparently, Kimijima proposed to Yoshikawa a mere two months after his engagement to a banker's daughter was broken off, a result of her discovery of Akira's two-year-old son by a 31-year-old sexual masseuse with whom he lived):

> . . . Akira and Towako met when their jobs brought them into contact in February, and were mutually attracted. On May 30, Akira invited Yoshikawa on a date, then proposed to her on their second date, June 8th.
>
> At that point, according to O-san, a source close to the Kimijimas, **it was decided to use the banquet hall reservations that had been made for the wedding that the earlier fiancée had cancelled.**
>
> A fashion source who knows the Kimijimas said: "Akira must have figured, well, I've got to get across and here's a boat. If you know how the Kimijimas are about money, it makes sense. They probably just figured it would cost less to get another bride than to start over from scratch."
>
> . . . **[I]f, while continuing to live with A-san [the masseuse], [Akira] had an interview to set up an arranged marriage with the banker's daughter, was in turn rebuffed, and then proposed to Yoshikawa all in the space of two months—if all that is true as reported, we can only be shocked.**
>
> Moreover, if he intended to use the reservations that were made for the banquet with the other young woman, we can only conclude that as far as Akira's concerned, **it doesn't matter who the bride is.** And if so, calling Yoshikawa a "substitute bride" is not unreasonable. . . . [bold passages in original]

WHY SCANDALS FADE INTO THE MIST

Americans who dig the snappy frontier justice of media swoops in the TV-movie age may find the way Japanese

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scandals do a slow fade rather boring. Nobody gets to the bottom of anything. Nobody expects them to.

Years ago, I asked film director Itami Jūzō why the powers-that-be in Japan find it so hard to apologize for World War II. He asked me if I knew what a *bōnenkai* ("year-forgetting party") is. I nodded, and he said, "Well, we have those come December. We get drunk and sentimental about the year for one night, and that's it. We've forgotten that year. On to the next!"

Is there an automatic erase function built into the national hard disk? Maybe.

In *The Enigma of Japanese Power*, Karel van Wolferen indicates that "corruption in Japan is in a sense legitimized by its systematic perpetration" while scandals are used to quell individuals and groups who become so independently powerful that they threaten the balance of the whole. Such reality management is possible, according to van Wolferen, thanks to the cartelization of the Japanese media and advertising sector, which empowers advertisers and the companies they represent to retaliate as a bloc against perpetrators of discomfiting accusations.

In *Tokyo Nights*, a novel dealing with the Ginza club scene during the boom years, Donald Richie is handling material that is scandalous by its very nature, yet his self-prostituting characters slog through their nightly grind without so much as blinking, forgetting by morning whatever discomfort (moral or otherwise) they've had to undergo. It's not a terribly flattering portrait of the national attention span, although it does seem awfully accurate.

Here's my thesis. Because American culture has been dominated by monotheism, it's hell-bent on purging heretics and eliminating ambiguity; it hates fuzziness. ("Git a rope!" as they used to say.) So media coverage in the United States (like the movies and novels) plays to the craving for simple, honest heroes and despicable villains, as rendered through seemingly realistic storytelling. We grow up loving the good guys and hating the bad guys, but hating phony stagecraft even more.

Contrast Japan's pantheism. Shinto alone hosts eight million gods; Buddhism teems with mandalas overstocked with multi-limbed divinities; even Christian martyrdom in Japan quickly turned into a numbers game. With so many big shots cruising the heavens, nobody's in charge because everybody's in charge. There's no sense of life as a straightforward morality play—you wear different masks for each god and situation you deal with; stagecraft and staginess are overtly displayed as part of the fun. It's all a play, anyway.

One Japanese scandal fades out; another replaces it. Don't forget to bring your popcorn. ❖

***William Marsh**, a freelance writer and editor living in Tokyo, costarred in the 1991 flop historical epic* Tohōkenbunroku *and is writing a book for Weatherhill entitled* Pop Japanese.

• git a rope = get a rope = （リンチ用の）ロープを持ってこい *(rinchi-yō no) rōpu o motte koi* • phony = いんちきの／ごまかしの *inchiki no/gomakashi no*

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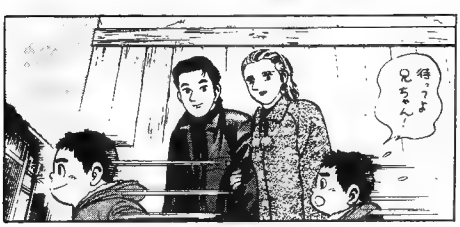
Kasai no Hito, first serialized in the weekly magazine *Big Comic Original* in 1989, centers on the life of Kawata Yoshio, an eccentric judge. The series has since been dramatized for TV, and the stories, which are still being written, now fill 13 *tankōbon* compilations (each over 200 pages).

The popularity of the series seems to stem from both the good-natured wisdom of its hero, Judge Kawata, and the glimpse it offers of Japan's judicial system as it deals with current social issues ranging from divorce to substance abuse.

Judge Kawata Yoshio is considered "a rather strange fellow" by his colleagues. As the son of a Supreme Court justice, he had an excellent chance of advancing to the upper echelons of Japan's judicial system, but he couldn't be less interested. He remains instead at a low-level family court in a remote city where the rural setting gives him the opportunity to pursue his true love—plants. In between hearings, on lunch breaks, and just about any time he isn't in court, Kawata is sitting in nearby flower beds, running his fingers along bushes, or staring off into space in a park.

He may be strange, but the lessons Judge Kawata learns from his experiences with plants come in handy when interacting with people as well. Many of his cases deal with wayward children, divorce, and the general trauma of human relations gone awry. Seeing parallels in the way both plants and people respond to love and attention, he maintains a perspective that often leads to more humane solutions in the courtroom.



The story so far . . .

Judge Ishimine Wataru has just been transferred from Tokyo to Harukawa City, a major detour in his career. Assignments to small regional courts outside of Tokyo typically mean being sidelined from promotion to the highest ranks. His French wife, Sara, however, is delighted to be away from the hustle and bustle of the big city.

On the day of the big move, Ishimine and Sara arrive ahead of their belongings and decide to take some time to explore their new home. They have no particular destination, so when two little boys race past them, Ishimine, an amateur photographer, decides to follow in hopes of getting some good pictures. He and Sara soon find themselves in the middle of an extraordinarily lush, green garden, where they see the boys chatting away excitedly with an odd-looking man squatting in the ferns. Unable to help themselves, they eavesdrop on the conversation.

The word *kasai* means "family court" when written as 家裁, an abbreviation for *katei saibansho* (家庭裁判所). The authors of this manga have created a pun of sorts by replacing 裁 (*sai*, "judgment/decision") with 栽 (*sai*, "planting").

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ポポ
コッ
ポン
ポン
1
やあ。
2
今日は何見てんの？
何見てんの？
3
ウラジロっていうシダだよ。
あ、お正月のお餅のパンツだ！
4

1 **Sound FX**: ポン　ポン　ポコッ
Pon　pon　poko!
(effect of ball bouncing, then hitting the man in the back)

2 **Kuwata**: やあ。
Yā.
(greeting)
"Hi!" (PL2)

- *yā* is an informal greeting ("hi!/hey!/yo!") used by male speakers.

3 **Older Bro.**: 今日　は　何　見てん　の?
Kyō　wa　nani　miten　no?
today as for what is/are looking at (explan.)
"What're you looking at today?" (PL2)

Younger Bro.: 何　見てん　の?
Nani　miten　no?
what is/are looking at (explan.)
"What're you looking at?" (PL2)

- *o*, to mark *nani* ("what") as the object of the verb, has been omitted, as it often is in colloquial speech.
- *miten* is a contraction of *mite iru* ("is/are looking at"), from *miru* ("see/look at").
- using the explanatory *no* with the intonation of a question is a very common way to ask questions in colloquial speech, especially among children and female speakers.

4 **Kuwata**: ウラジロ　って　いう　シダ　だ　よ。
Urajiro　tte　iu　shida　da　yo.
white-back (quote) say/call fern is (emph.)
"A fern called the 'white-back fern.'" (PL2)

Older Bro.: あ、　お正月　の　お餅　の　パンツ　だ!
A,　o-shōgatsu　no　o-mochi　no　pantsu　da.
(interj.) (hon.)-New Year's of (hon.)-rice cakes of pants/underpants is
"Oh, it's the underpants for the *mochi* at New Year's!" (PL2)

- *urajiro* (from *ura*, "back," and *shiro*, "white"; *sh* changes to *j* for euphony) is a fern with leaves that are a light, frosty green on the underside.
- *tte* is a colloquial equivalent of quotative *to*. X *to iu* Y often means "a Y called/named X," so *urajiro tte iu shida* = "a fern called *urajiro*/white-back."
- *a* is an interjection used when suddenly noticing or recognizing something.
- *shōgatsu* (often with the honorific prefix *o-*) refers to "New Year's" and all its attendant observances.
- *mochi* refers to a glutinous rice that has been steamed and pounded into a solid mass and then shaped into round cakes or cut into squares, etc. It's traditional for families to prepare (or, these days, buy) *mochi* at the end of the year for eating at New Year's or for making *kagamimochi* (鏡餅), two round cakes of *mochi* stacked one atop the other (the top one is slightly smaller in size) and placed in the home's decorative alcove (*tokonoma*, 床の間) or some other appropriate place as an offering to the gods.
- *pantsu* is a katakana rendering of the English "pants," but in Japanese it normally means "underpants." *Kagamimochi* decorations can range from very simple to very elaborate, but a fairly standard item is *urajiro* leaves draped over the offering stand on which the *mochi* cakes are placed. This boy apparently thinks the overall appearance of the *kagami-mochi* on the stand with its decorations resembles a human figure, and the leaves look like underpants.

夏になるとこの葉の裏にツブツブの小さな胞子がたくさんできるんだ。
種子？
1
2

1 **Kuwata**: 夏　になると　この　葉　の　裏　に　ツブツブの　小さな　胞子　が　たくさんできる　んだ。
Natsu ni naru to kono ha no ura ni tsubutsubu no chiisa na hōshi ga takusan dekiru n da.
summer when becomes this/these leaves of backs on bumpy small spores (subj.) many form (explan.)
"In the summer, lots of bumpy little spores form on the backs of these leaves." (PL2)

Older Brother: 種子?
Tane?
seeds
"Are they seeds?" (PL2)

- *ni* marks the result of the verb *naru* ("become") so *ni naru* as a unit is equivalent to the English "become." Since *to* after the plain, non-past form of a verb can make a conditional "when" meaning, *ni naru to* = "when it becomes" → *natsu ni naru to* = "when it becomes summer" → "in the summer."
- *kono* can be either "this" or "these."
- *tsubu* = "a grain," and *tsubutsubu* describes something that has tiny bumps or is "grainy/granular/coarse" in texture.
- *chiisa na* is an alternate form of the adjective *chiisai* ("small").
- when speaking of natural phenomena, *dekiru* often means "forms": *hōshi ga dekiru* = "spores form."

2 **Sound FX**: パシャリ
Pashari
(sound of camera shutter)

胞子は種子じゃないんだよ。
種子みたいになるまでの、いくつか前の形なんだよ。
小さな胞子が下に落ちたり風に運ばれて遠くの土地に落ちたりすると、そこで前葉体という体を作ってその中で卵と精子を作るんだ。
1
ぜんようたい？
お婿さんとお嫁さんみたいなものが、子供を作るためにできるんだよ。
2
普通の草と違うの？
違うの？
3
ウラジロは花を持たないんだ。
花がないとどう違うの？
どう違うの？
花は君達のお家みたいなものだよ。
？
？
4
君達は子供だからお父さんとお母さんがご飯を食べさせてくれるでしょう？
5
カレーライスが好き！
ボク ハンバーグ！
6

1 **Kuwata**: 胞子 は 種子 じゃない んだ よ。種子 みたい になる まで の、いくつか 前 の 形 なんだ よ。
Hōshi wa tane ja nai n da yo. Tane mitai ni naru made no, ikutsu ka mae no katachi na n da yo.
spores as for seeds are not (explan.) (emph.) seed like become until of several before of shape (explan.) (emph.)
"Spores aren't seeds. They're a form that's still several steps from becoming like seeds." (PL2)

Kuwata: 小さな 胞子 が 下 に落ちたり 風 に 運ばれて 遠く の 土地 に 落ちたりすると、
Chiisa na hōshi ga shita ni ochitari kaze ni hakobarete tōku no tochi ni ochitari suru to,
small spores (subj.) below/ground to fall-or wind by be carried-and far that is land to/on or when fall
そこで 前葉体 と いう 体 を 作って その中で 卵 と 精子 を 作る んだ。
soko de zen'yōtai to iu tai o tsukutte sono naka de tamago to seishi o tsukuru n da.
there at prothallium (quote) called body (obj.) form-and inside that egg and sperm/antherozoid (obj.) make (explan.)
"When the tiny spores fall to the ground or get carried somewhere far away by the wind, they form something called a prothallium, and inside that they develop male and female cells for reproduction." (PL2)

- *n da* and *na n da* are used when making explanations. The *na* is necessary after nouns, but not verbs or adjectives.
- *mitai* after nouns, adjectives, and verbs implies "that's the way it seems/that's what it's like." ～ *mitai ni naru* = "becomes like ～."
- *ikutsu* asks a question ("how many?") but *ikutsu ka* as a modifier means "several." *Ikutsu ka mae* = "several [items/stages, etc.] before."
- *ochitari* is from *ochiru* ("fall/drop"), and *shita* (literally "under/below") here essentially refers to "the ground," so *shita ni ochiru* = "fall to the ground."
- the *-tari* form of a verb followed immediately or later in the sentence by *suru* means "do something/things like ～"; when several *-tari* verbs occur in sequence, the meaning becomes "do things like ～ and/or ～, etc." Sometimes you can think of *-tari* simply as "and/or."
- *hakobarete* is the *-te* form of *hakobareru* ("be carried/transported"), from *hakobu* ("carry/transport").
- *tōku* is what we usually call the adverb form of the adjective *tōi* ("far/distant"), but in this case it's acting as a noun. *No* between two nouns lets the first describe the second, and *tochi* = "land," so *tōku no tochi* = "land that is far away."
- *to* after a non-past verb can make a conditional "if/when" meaning.
- *tsukutte* is the *-te* form of *tsukuru* ("make/form").

2 **Older**: ぜんようたい?
Zen'yōtai?
"Prothallium?" (PL2)

Kuwata: お婿さん と お嫁さん みたいな もの が、 子供 を 作る ために できる んだ よ。
Omuko-san to oyome-san mitai na mono ga kodomo o tsukuru tame ni dekiru n da yo.
(hon.)-groom-(hon.) and (hon.)-bride-(hon.) like thing (subj.) children (obj.) make in order to form (explan.) (emph.)
"Something like a bride and groom are formed in order to make children." (PL2)

- *mono* = "thing," so ～ *mitai na mono* = "something/things like ～."
- *tame (ni)* after a non-past verb means "in order to/for the purpose of [doing the action]."

3 **Older**: 普通の 草 と 違う の?
Futsū no kusa to chigau no?
ordinary grass/herb from different (explan.)
"Are they different from ordinary grass?"
"They're different from other plants?" (PL2)

Younger: 違うの?
Chigau no?
"They're different?" (PL2)

- *to* marks *kusa* ("grass") as what the topic (i.e., white-back ferns) is different from.

4 **Kuwata**: ウラジロ は 花 を 持たない んだ。
Urajiro wa hana o motanai n da.
white-back ferns as for flowers (obj.) don't hold/have (explan.)
"White-back ferns don't have flowers." (PL2)

Older: 花 が ないと、 どう 違う の?
Hana ga nai to, dō chigau no?
flowers (subj.) if/when don't exist/have how is different (explan.)
"How're they different if they don't have flowers?" (PL2)

Younger: どう違うの?
Dō chigau no?
"How're they different?" (PL2)

Kuwata: 花 は 君達 の お家 みたいな もの だ よ。
Hana wa kimi-tachi no o-uchi mitai na mono da yo.
flowers as for you-(plural) 's (hon.)-house/home like thing is (emph.)
"A flower is sort of like your house." (PL2)

- *motanai* is the negative form of *motsu* ("hold/have/be endowed with"). *Hana o motanai* = "are not endowed with flowers" → "don't produce/make flowers."
- *hana ga nai* is a complete thought/sentence ("[they] don't have flowers"), and *to* makes a conditional "if/when" meaning → "if they don't have/produce flowers."
- *kimi* is an informal word for "you," generally used only by males when addressing equals or subordinates. *-Tachi* makes nouns referring to people into plurals. Both *kimi* and *kimi-tachi* would be translated "you" in English, but in Japanese you must use *kimi-tachi* when addressing more than one person.

(continued on next page)

お家で大きく育って
土に落ちるのが種子で
飛んでから自分で
育つのが胞子だね。
ふ〜〜〜ん…
1
夏になったら
前葉体を探して
みようか？
うん！
「ぜんようたい」
見たい！
2
まったく
奇妙な人物でした。
3
見たところ背広を着た、ごく
普通の勤め人に見えるのですが、
いい大人が四、五歳の子供相手に
熱心に話し込んでいるのです。
だからといって教育している
ようには見えない……
どうやら子供達よりも本人の方が
目の前の葉っぱに感じ入っている
様子でその気分に子供達を巻き込み
たがっているようです。
まったく無邪気このうえなく、
かえって子供の方が
彼の子供っぽさに
つき合っているような
印象さえあるのです。
4

(continued from previous page)

5 **Kuwata**: 君達 は 子供 だ から お父さん と お母さん が ご飯 を 食べさせてくれる でしょう?
Kimi-tachi wa kodomo da kara o-tōsan to o-kāsan ga gohan o tabesasete kureru deshō?
you-(plur.) as for children are because/so (hon.)-father and (hon.)-mother (subj.) food/meals (obj.) allow you eat probably/right?
"You're still children, so your dad and mom let you eat meals, right?"
"You're still little, so you depend on your mom and dad to provide you with food to eat, right?" (PL3)

- *tabesasete* is the *-te* form of *tabesaseru*, the causative ("make/let") form of *taberu* ("eat"). Here the causative form implies "allow/let" in the sense of providing for the action rather than granting permission.
- *kureru* after the *-te* form of a verb implies the action is done for the subject (in this case, the boys).
- *deshō* makes a conjecture ("probably/surely is") or, with a rising intonation, a conjectural question ("is perhaps?"). Often it's a purely rhetorical question that expects the listener to confirm the conjecture, like the tag "right?"

6 **Older**: カレーライス が 好き!
Karē raisu ga suki!
curry rice (subj.) like
"I like curry rice!" (PL2)

Younger: ボク、 ハンバーグ!
Boku, hanbāgu!
I/me Hamburg steak
"I like Hamburg steak!" (PL2)

- *suki da/desu* is essentially equivalent to the verb "like"; in informal speech, *da/desu* is often omitted.
- when speaking of things to eat, *hanbāgu* is the katakana rendering of "Hamburg," referring to "Hamburg steak"—a patty of seasoned ground beef fried or broiled and eaten like a steak. It's clearly distinguished from the plain beef *hanbaga* (ハンバーガー, "hamburger") eaten on a bun, as well as from *Hanburugu* (ハンブルグ, the city of Hamburg).

---

1 **Kuwata**: お家 で 大きく 育って 土 に 落ちる の が 種子 で、
O-uchi de ōkiku sodatte tsuchi ni ochiru no ga tane de,
(hon.)-home at large grow-then ground to fall ones (subj) seeds are-and
飛んでから 自分で 育つ の が 胞子 だ ね。
tonde kara jibun de sodatsu no ga hōshi da ne.
after flying by themselves grow ones (subj) spores are (colloq)
"You could say that the ones that grow big at home and then fall to the ground are seeds, and the ones that fly off somewhere first and grow up on their own are spores." (PL2)

Boys: ふ〜ん...
Fūn...
"I see..." (PL2)

- *ōkiku* is the adverb form of *ōkii* ("large"), and *sodatte* is the *-te* form of *sodatsu* ("grow/mature"); *ōkiku sodatsu* = "grow big/grow up." The *-te* form is being used here to indicate an action that takes place before another in a sequence: "grow big first, then fall to the ground."
- *o-uchi de ōkiku sodatte tsuchi ni ochiru* is a complete thought/sentence ("[they] grow big at home and then fall to the ground") modifying *no*, which here is like the pronoun "one/ones" → "the ones that grow big at home and then fall to the ground." *Ga* marks *no* as the subject.
- *tonde* is the *-te* form of *tobu* ("fly"); *kara* after the *-te* form of a verb means "after [the action occurs]."
- *jibun* = "oneself," or "me/myself," "he/himself," "you/yourself," "they/themselves," etc., depending on the context. *Jibun de* = "by oneself/myself/themselves," etc.
- *tonde kara jibun de sodatsu* is a complete thought/sentence ("after flying, [they] grow up by themselves") modifying the pronoun *no*.
- *fūn* is an interjection showing that one is listening with interest: "oh/is that so/really/hmm, I see."

2 **Kuwata**: 夏 になったら 前葉体 を 探してみようか?
Natsu ni nattara zen'yōtai o sagashite miyō ka?
summer when becomes prothallium (obj.) shall we try looking for?
"Shall we try looking for a prothallium when summer comes?" (PL2)

Boys: うん!
Un!
"Yeah!" (PL2)

Younger: 「ぜんようたい」 見たい!
"Zen'yōtai" mitai!
prothallium want to see
"I want to see a prothallium!" (PL2)

- *nattara* is a conditional "if/when" form of *naru* ("become"), so *natsu ni nattara* means "when it becomes summer" → "when summer comes/in the summer."
- *sagashite* is the *-te* form of *sagasu* ("look/search [for]"), and *miyō* is the volitional ("let's/I shall"—or in a question, "shall I/we?") form of *miru* ("look/see"). A form of *miru* after the *-te* form of a verb means "try [doing the action]" or "[do the action] and see [what happens/how we fare/what we discover]."
- *mitai* is the "want to" form of *miru* ("look/see"), here being used for its straightforward meaning.

3 **Letter**: まったく 奇妙な 人物 でした。
Mattaku kimyō na jinbutsu deshita.
completely/truly strange/curious personage was
He was a most curious man. (PL3)

(continued on next page)

あの…
1
写真撮らせていただいていいですか？
2
はい。
3
4

(continued from previous page)

4 **Letter:** 見た ところ 背広 を 着た、 ごく 普通の 勤め人 に 見える のです が、
Mita tokoro sebiro o kita, goku futsu no tsutomenin ni mieru no desu ga,
viewed place suit (obj.) wore very/extremely normal working person as/like appears/looks (explan.) but

いい 大人 が 四、五歳の 子供 相手に 熱心に 話し込んでいる のです。
ii otona ga shi-gosai no kodomo aite ni nesshin ni hanashikonde iru no desu.
good/fine adult (subj.) 4 or 5 yr. old children as companions fervently is talking intensely (explan.)

At a glance, in the suit he wore, he had every appearance of an ordinary working man, but there he was, a fine adult, lost in fervent discourse with two children of four or five. (PL3)

だから と いって 教育している ように は 見えない。
Dakara to itte kyōiku shite iru yō ni wa mienai.
because it is so (quote) say is educating/teaching like as for does not appear

Yet it did not appear that he was educating them. (PL2)

Letter: どうやら 子供達 より も 本人 の 方 が 目 の 前の 葉っぱ に 感じ入っている 様子 で、
Dōyara kodomo-tachi yori mo honnin no hō ga me no mae no happa ni kanji-itte iru yōsu de,
apparently children more than even himself 's side (subj.) eyes of in front of leaves by/with is impressed appearance is-and

その 気分 に 子供達 を 巻き込みたがっている ようです。
sono kibun ni kodomo-tachi o makikomitagatte iru yō desu.
that mood into children (obj.) wants to entangle/draw in is as though

It seemed like he was himself fascinated by the leaves before his eyes even more than the children were, and he wanted to draw the children into that fascination. (PL3)

まったく 無邪気 この うえ なく、 かえって 子供 の 方 が
Mattaku mujaki kono ue naku, kaette kodomo no hō ga
complete innocence this above not exist-and to the contrary children 's side (subj.)

彼の 子供っぽさ に つき合っている ような 印象 さえ ある のです。
kare no kodomopposa ni tsukiatte iru yō na inshō sae aru no desu.
his child-likeness with going along/playing like impression even exists (explan.)

He seemed the very height of innocence, and contrary to expectations, there was even the impression that the children were the ones going along with his childishness.

He seemed the very height of innocence, and I didn't get the impression that he was playing along with the children so much as that the children were playing along with him. (PL3)

- *mita tokoro* is an expression for "at a glance/by surface appearances/on the face of it."
- *kita* is the plain/abrupt past form of *kiru* ("wear/don").
- *goku* is an emphasizer, like "very/extremely"; *goku futsū* = "very/utterly normal."
- ～ *ni mieru* describes how something appears—what it looks like. After a verb it becomes ～ *yō ni mieru*, describing how the action looks/appears; ～ *(yō) ni wa mienai* is its negative form: "doesn't look like/appear that ～."
- *kodomo aite ni* implies *kodomo o aite ni shite*, literally, "making children his companions." *Aite* basically means "counterpart" and can refer to persons ranging from a "companion/mate/partner" to a "rival/opponent/enemy."
- *hanashikonde iru* is from *hanashikomu*, the stem of the verb *hanasu* ("talk/speak") plus *-komu*, which as a verb suffix can imply the action is done fully/at length/with particular intensity.
- *itte* is the *-te* form of *iu* ("say"); *da kara to itte* is literally "saying 'because it is so,'" but idiomatically it means "yet/for all that/just because of that."
- *kyōiku shite iru* is the progressive ("is/are ～ing") form of *kyōiku suru* ("educate").
- *dōyara* is used together with expressions like *rashii* and *yō da/desu* to express a tentative conclusion based on what one has observed or learned so far.
- *honnin* = "the person him/herself"; ～ *yori (mo)* ～ *no hō ga* is used in comparisons, with *yori* following the lesser and *hō ga* following the greater item, so *kodomo-tachi yori mo honnin no hō ga* = "he himself even more than the children."
- *kanji-itte iru* is from *kanji iru* ("be moved/impressed/fascinated [by]").
- *makikomitagatte iru* is from *makikomitagaru* ("show signs of wanting to entangle"), from *makikomitai* ("want to entangle/draw in"), the "want to" form of *makikomu* ("entangle/draw in").
- *-pposa* is a noun form of the suffix *-ppoi*, which makes an adjective meaning "is like/is full of/is characterized by ～." *Kodomoppoi* = "childish/childlike," and *kodomopposa* = "childishness/childlike quality."
- *kaette* introduces clauses that express something contrary to what you would normally expect.
- *tsukiatte iru* is from *tsukiau*, which in this use means "interact/play with."
- *yō na* makes *kodomo no hō ga kare no kodomopposa ni tsukiatte iru* into a modifier for *inshō* ("impression").

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1 **Ishimine:** あの . . .
Ano . . .
(interj.)
"Excuse me . . ." (PL3)

- *ano* is a hesitation word similar to "uhh/um," but it usually feels quite a bit more polite. It's often used to get someone's attention, essentially like "Excuse me."

2 **Ishimine:** 写真 撮らせていただいて いい ですか?
Shashin torasete itadaite ii desu ka?
photograph allow to take-(receive) OK is it?
"Would it be all right if I took some pictures?" (PL3-4)

- *o*, to mark *shashin* ("photograph") as the object of the verb, has been omitted.

- *torasete* is the *-te* form of *toraseru*, the causative ("make/let") form of *toru*, which when written with this kanji means "take [a picture]" or "film [a movie]/record [on video]." *Itadaite* is the *-te* form of *itadaku* ("receive," when used as an independent verb). A causative *-te* form plus *itadaku* is often a roundabout and polite way of saying "I will [do the action]," but *-te ii desu ka* is a polite way of asking for permission, so in this case it becomes a polite "may I [do the action]?"

(continued on next page)

ピース
ピース。
ピース
ピース。
1
ピース。
ピース。
2
初めて
お会いしますね?
ピース
ピース
3
今日、東京から
引っ越して
来ました。
4
ようこそ。
5
は…
はあ……
6
ようこそ。
こんにちは。
7

(continued from previous page)

3 **Kuwata**: はい。
Hai.
yes
"Certainly." (PL3)

4 **Sound FX**: パシャリッ
Pashari!
(sound of camera shutter)

- the boys are pulling a playful face often seen among Japanese children. It is sometimes accompanied by the word *akanbei*, a childish insult along the lines of "Nyaah!"

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1 **Boys**: ピース　ピース。　ピース　ピース。
Piisu piisu. Piisu piisu.
"Peace, peace. Peace, peace." (PL2)

- many Japanese, especially children and young people, like to flash the peace symbol when being photographed.

2 **Boys**: ピース。ピース。
Piisu. Piisu.
"Peace. Peace." (PL2)

3 **Kuwata**: 初めて　お会いします　ね?
Hajimete o-ai shimasu ne?
for first time (hon.)-meeting do (colloq.)
"I meet you for the first time, don't I?"
"I don't believe we've met before." (PL4)

Boys: ピース。ピース。
Piisu. Piisu.
"Peace. Peace." (PL2)

- *o-ai shimasu* (PL4 polite form) = *o-ai suru* (PL4 plain form) = *aimasu* (PL3) = *au* (PL2) = "meet." For most verbs, the honorific prefix *o-* plus the stem of the verb (the PL3 form without the *-masu*) followed by *suru* ("do") creates a PL4 ve that is considered humble—i.e., it expresses politeness by humbling the action of the speaker. Since a person does not u the humble form of a verb to speak of his listener's action, the subject of a humble verb is usually the speaker or someon close to him—which is why we give "I meet you" rather than "we meet" in our initial, more literal translation.

4 **Ishimine**: 今日、東京　から 引っ越して来ました。
Kyō, Tōkyō kara hikkoshite kimashita.
today Tokyo from moved-and-came
"We just moved here from Tokyo today." (PL3)

- *hikkoshite* is the *-te* form of *hikkosu* ("move/relocate [one's residence or place of business]"), and *kimashita* is the PL3 past form of *kuru* ("come"). A form of *kuru* after the *-te* form of a verb often indicates the action moves/moved toward the speaker. Using *kuru* here reflects the direction of the move—toward the present location.

5 **Kuwata**: ようこそ。
Yōkoso.
(greeting)
"Welcome." (PL3-4)

- *yōkoso*, originally a word for emphasizing various polite expressions of "welcome," has come to mean "welcome" all by itself.

6 **Ishimine**: は、　はあ . . .
Ha- hā . . .
(stammer) yes
"Th-thank you." (PL3)

- *hā* is a tentative and uncertain *hai* ("yes"), here mainly serving as an acknowledgment of the greeting.

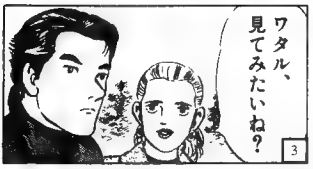
7 **Kuwata**: ようこそ。
Yōkoso.
"Welcome." (PL3-4)

Sara: こんにちは。
Konnichi wa.
hello/good afternoon
"Good afternoon." (PL3)

- *konnichi wa* is the standard daytime (mostly afternoon) greeting, like "hello/good day/good afternoon." It's used among general acquaintances, but not among family or close work associates.

ここは
いい町ですよ。
ひと月もすれば
ヤマブキも咲きます。
ヤマブキ？
1

ええ、
町から少し出れば
谷一面に花が咲く
場所があるんです。
黄色い小さな花が
どこまでも続いて
きれいですよ。
2


ワタル、
見てみたいね？
3

よかったら
御案内しましょう。
4

……

1 **Sound FX**: キャ キャ
Kya Kya
(squeals and shouts of children as they play)

Kuwata: ここ は いい 町 です よ。 ひと月 も すれば ヤマブキ も 咲きます。
Koko wa ii machi desu yo. Hitotsuki mo sureba yamabuki mo sakimasu.
here/this place as for good/fine town is (emph.) one month (approx.) when passes kerria also will bloom
"This is a nice town. In another month or so the kerria will bloom." (PL3)

Sara: ヤマブキ?
Yamabuki?
"Kerria?" (PL2)

- *hito-* is from *hitotsu* ("one") and *-tsuki* = "month," so *hitotsuki* = "one month."
- *mo* can be used after a number or quantity to imply that it's an approximation: "around ～/～ or so."
- *sureba* is a conditional "if/when" form of *suru* ("do"); *suru* after a time word means "[that much time] passes," so *hitotsuki mo sureba* = "when a month or so passes" → "in another month or so."
- *yamabuki* = "kerria" (*Kerria japonica*), a shrub of the rose family that produces bright, golden-yellow flowers in the spring.
- the most common use of *mo* is for the meaning of "too/also/as well." Even when a specific item of comparison is not stated, as here, the underlying feeling is that what comes before *mo* is similar to or in addition to something else (in this case, other plants).
- *sakimasu* is the PL3 form of the verb *saku* ("blossom/bloom").

2 **Kuwata**: ええ、町 から 少し 出れば 谷 一面に 花 が 咲く 場所 が ある んです。
Ē, machi kara sukoshi dereba tani ichimen ni hana ga saku basho ga aru n desu.
yes town from a little if go out valley all across flowers (subj.) bloom place (subj.) exists (explan.)
"Yes, if you go a little way out of town there's a place where [kerria] flowers bloom all across the valley."
"Yes, just outside town, there's a place where kerria blossoms fill the entire valley." (PL3)

Kuwata: 黄色い 小さな 花 が どこまでも 続いて きれい です よ。
Kiiroi chiisa na hana ga doko made mo tsuzuite kirei desu yo.
yellow small flowers (subj.) on and on continue-(cause) pretty is/are (emph.)
"The small yellow flowers go on and on forever and it's really beautiful."
"The little yellow flowers spread out as far as the eye can see. It's really beautiful." (PL3)

- *dereba* is a conditional "if/when" form of *deru* ("go/come out").
- ～ *ichimen ni* = "all across the face of ～."
- *tani ichimen ni hana ga saku* is a complete thought/sentence ("flowers bloom all across the valley") modifying *basho* ("place").
- *chiisa na* is an alternate form of the adjective *chiisai* ("small"); *kiiroi* ("yellow") and *chiisa na* both modify *hana* ("flower").
- *doko made mo* is an expression for "on and on (forever)," and *tsuzuite* is the *-te* form of *tsuzuku* ("continue/go on"): *doko made mo tsuzuku* = "go on and on forever" → "spread out as far as the eye can see." The *-te* form of *tsuzuku* is used to state the cause of/reason for what follows: because the flowers go on and on, it's really beautiful.

3 **Sara**: ワタル、 見てみたい ね?
Wataru, mite mitai ne?
(name) want to try seeing (colloq.)
"I'd love to see it, wouldn't you, Wataru?" (PL2)

- *mite* is the *-te* form of *miru* ("see/look at"), and *mitai* is the "want to" form of the same verb. A form of *miru* after the *-te* form of any verb implies "try [doing the action]" or "[do the action] and see [what it's like]."
- *ne* assumes or solicits the listener's agreement. In this case, since she has stated something she would like to do, it's like saying "wouldn't you like to do it, too?"

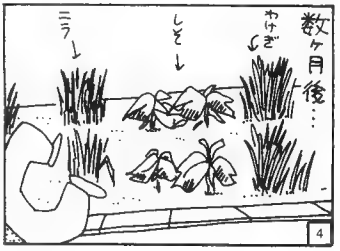
4 **Kuwata**: よかったら 御案内 しましょう。
Yokattara go-annai shimashō.
if is good/desirable (hon.)-guide shall do
"I'll take you there if you'd like." (PL4)

- *yokattara* is a conditional "if" form of the adjective *ii/yoi* ("good/fine/OK") = "if it is good/desirable (for you)" → "if you'd like."
- *annai* is a noun meaning "guidance/information," and adding a form of *suru* makes it a verb: *annai suru* = "guide/lead/show the way." *Shimashō* is the volitional ("let's/I shall") form of *shimasu*, which is the PL3 form of *suru*. *Go-* is an honorific prefix.

To be continued . . .

オバタリアン
Obatarian

by 堀田かつひこ / Hotta Katsuhiko



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1 **Manager**: いやー、 団地 花だん作り に
Iyā, *danchi* *kadan-zukuri* *ni*
(interj.) housing dev./apt. complex flower bed-making in/on/at
皆さん が これ ほど 協力的 と は!
minasan *ga* *kore* *hodo* *kyōryoku-teki* *to* *wa!*
everyone/you all (subj.) this extent cooperative (quote) as for
"Well, well, as for having everyone be this cooperative in making the housing complex's flower beds, [how wonderful]!"
"Well, well, what a pleasure to see everyone pitching in so nicely on planting the flower beds in our housing complex!" (PL2)

- *iyā* is a "warm-up" word, like "well, well/my, my," used when expressing delight at or approval of something; it gives a kind of exclamatory emphasis.
- a *danchi* is a large apartment complex with many multi-story buildings.
- *-zukuri* after a noun means "the making of ～." It comes from *tsukuru* ("make"); the *ts* changes to *z* for euphony. Since they don't seem to be constructing new flower beds where there were none before, "making" in this case refers to "planting."
- *minasan* is a polite word for addressing or referring to "everyone/all of you" in a particular group; it implies quite a few people, so the implication is that many other women are pitching in, too, in addition to the two shown. Adding *no* as in the next panel makes it possessive: *minasan no* = "everyone's/your."
- *kyōryoku* = "cooperation/collaboration," and *kyōryoku-teki* = "cooperative."
- *to wa* makes the entire preceding sentence into the topic of an unspoken exclamation—here an exclamation of pleasure/delight: "as for ～, how wonderful!"

2 **Manager**: 皆さんの 団地 を 愛する 気持ち が
Minasan no *danchi* *o* *aisuru* *kimochi* *ga*
everyone's/your housing complex (obj.) love feelings (subj.)
きっと 美しい 花 を 咲かせます よ。 ハハハ
kitto *utsukushii* *hana* *o* *sakasemasu* *yo.* *Ha ha ha*
surely beautiful flowers (obj.) will make bloom (emph.) (laugh)
"Your love for your housing complex will surely bring us beautiful flowers. Ha ha ha." (PL3)

- *danchi o aisuru* is a complete thought/sentence ("[you] love the housing complex") modifying *kimochi* ("feelings") → "feelings that you love the housing complex" → "love for the housing complex." *Minasan no* ("your") also modifies *kimochi*, so it becomes "your love for the housing complex."
- *kitto* can range in meaning from a wishful/not very confident "probably/perhaps" to a "surely/certainly/undoubtedly" spoken with a high degree of confidence, but it stops short of absolute sureness.
- *sakasemasu* is the PL3 form of *sakaseru* ("make bloom"), the causative ("make/let") form of *saku* ("bloom").

3 **Narration**: 数ヶ月後…
Sūkagetsu-go…
Several months later…

Arrows:

わけぎ	しそ	ニラ
Wakegi	*Shiso*	*Nira*
Welsh onions	**Beefsteak plant**	**Garlic chives**

- *sū-* is a prefix meaning "several," and *-kagetsu* is the counter suffix for months, so *sūkagetsu* = "several months."
- *-go* appended to a time word means "[that much time] later."
- *shiso* ("perilla" or "beefsteak plant") comes in red and green varieties, both used in Japanese cooking.

オバタリアン
Obatarian

by 堀田かつひこ / Hotta Katsuhiko

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1 **Older woman**: おや、ふきのとう。
Oya, fukinotō.
(interj.) butterbur flower
"Oh, butterburs!" (PL2)

- *oya* is an interjection used when suddenly noticing something, typically with a feeling of mild surprise.
- the appearance of butterbur flower stems is one of the early signs of spring. Both the young flower stems (*fukinotō*) and the mature leaf stalks (*fuki*) are edible.

2 **Students**: あっ、ふきのとう。
A!, fukinotō.
(interj.) butterbur flower
"Look, butterburs!" (PL2)

- *a!* indicates the speaker has suddenly noticed or recognized something, like "oh!/hey!"

3 **Young mother**: まあ、ふきのとう。 春 ねえ。
Mā, fukinotō. Haru nē.
(interj.) butterbur flower spring (exclam.)
"Oh my, butterburs! It really is spring!" (PL2)

- *mā* is commonly used by women as an interjection of surprise. Though both men and women can use *mā* as a "softener" or verbal "warm-up"/pause, men sound effeminate when they use the word to express surprise.
- *ne* by itself often replaces *da ne* or *desu ne* ("is, isn't it"); elongating the vowel gives it the feeling of an exclamation.

4 **Sound FX**: ガシャ ガシャ ガシャ
Gasha gasha gasha
Clatter clatter clatter (sound of bicycle rattling/bumping along)

Sound FX: ブチ ブチッ
Buchi buchi!
Thwap thwap! (sound of butterburs getting flattened by bicycle tires)

On Flier: 特売
Tokubai
special selling
Sale!

Narration: オバタリアン に 季節 を
Obatarian ni kisetsu o
obatarian to/for season (obj.)
感じる 余裕 は ない。
kanjiru yoyū wa nai.
sense/notice leeway/margin as for not have
Obatarian has no time for paying attention to the season.

- *kanjiru* means "feel/sense/experience" → "notice/pay attention to." *Kisetsu o kanjiru* is a complete thought/sentence ("[she] notices the season") modifying *yoyū*.
- *yoyū* refers to a "surplus" or "extra leeway/margin" in the amount of something available. It can be something concrete, like a physical object, a substance, or space, or it can be more abstract, like time, financial means, mental preparedness, emotional balance, etc. In this case, Obatarian's obvious haste indicates it's primarily a reference to time.

OL進化論

オーエル

OL Shinkaron

Theory of the Evolution of the OL

秋月りす
by Akizuki Risu

The letters OL (pronounced *ō-eru*) stand for "Office Lady," but the women who bear that title are usually called simply "OLs." *Shinkaron* means "theory of the evolution of . . ."

OLs are women, usually well-educated, young, and unmarried, who perform a variety of tasks around the office. Being an OL is not a career: the work is generally dull, there is little opportunity for advancement, and managers expect OLs to quit after a few years, before seniority drives their salaries up.

Even so, the men they work with often view OL life with envy. Their jobs—serving tea, working the reception desk, making copies—carry little responsibility. With no chance of promotion, OLs don't have to curry favor with their bosses. Every day at around 5 o'clock, they change from dowdy work uniforms into expensive, fashionable clothes and go out on glamorous dates, while the men put in mandatory overtime. OLs usually live with their parents, so they can devote much of their salaries to exotic foreign vacations. And then, after a few years, they snag a mate and settle into quiet lives at home.

These are the fond stereotypes, anyway, upon which comics strips such as this are based. Although drawn by a woman, *OL Shinkaron* has appeared in the men's magazine *Shūkan Morning* since the mid-1980s.

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1

OL1: ちょっと いい ですか?
Chotto ii desu ka?
a little fine/OK is it?
"Do you have a minute?" (PL3)

OL1: 社内報の 「新人さん いらっしゃい」と いう インタビュー です が。
Shanai-hō no "Shinjin-san Irasshai" to iu intabyū desu ga.
company/employee newsletter newcomer-(hon.) welcome (quote) say interview is but
"I'd like to interview you for the 'Welcome Newcomers' feature in our employee newsletter." (PL3)

New Employee: はい。
Hai.
yes/OK
"All right." (PL3)

- *chotto ii desu ka* is a generic expression for asking if a person has time for something: "Do you have a minute?/Could I bother you for a minute?"
- *shanai* = "within the company," and *hō* = "news/report/information"; *shanai-hō* refers to an informational bulletin or newsletter published for circulation within the company.
- X *to iu* Y often indicates that X is a more specific description or name for Y; here it indicates that *'Shinjin-san Irasshai'* is the title of the *intabyū* (katakana rendering of the English "interview").

2

OL1: へー、 お父様 は 銀行 の 取締役?!
Hē, otōsama wa ginkō no torishimariyaku?
(exclam.) father as for bank of board member
"Wow, your father's on the board of a bank?!" (PL2)

OL1: で、 好きな 女の子 の タイプ は?
De, suki na onna no ko no taipu wa?
and so like girl of type as for
"So, as for the type of girl you like?"
"And what type of woman do you like?" (PL2)

New Employee: 明るい、 活発な 人 です ね。
Akarui, kappatsu na hito desu ne.
bright/cheerful lively person is (colloq.)
"She is a cheerful, lively person."
"Someone who is cheerful and vivacious." (PL3)

- *hē* is a light exclamation, like "gee!/wow!/how about that!"—showing that the speaker is impressed.
- *de* is a colloquial short form of *sore de*, literally "with that," used as a conjunction to mean "and/and then/and so/because of that."

3

FX: ペコ
Peko
(effect of apologetic bow)

OL1: ごめんなさい。 先日 の 企画、 ページ数 の関係で ボツ になりました。
Gomen nasai. Senjitsu no kikaku, pēji-sū no kankei de botsu ni narimashita.
(apology) the other day of plan/feature number of pages owing to reject became
"I'm sorry. The feature I was here for the other day got cut because of space." (PL3)

New Employee: はあ...
Hā.
"I see." (PL2)

Newsletter: 社内報
Shanai-hō
Employee Newsletter

- *gomen nasai* is one of the most common ways to express an apology.
- *senjitsu* refers to a relatively recent date, ranging from a few days ago to as much as several weeks.
- *kikaku* (lit., "plan") can refer to a wide variety of projects/undertakings. In a publishing context, it can refer to the plan for a single article, a series of articles, a book, a series of books, etc.
- *pēji* is a katakana rendering of the English "page," *-sū* = "number," and *pēji-sū* = "number of pages"; *kankei* = "relation/connection," and *pēji-sū no kankei de* is literally "in connection with the number of pages" → "owing to the number of pages" → "because of space."
- *botsu* is an abbreviation of *bossho* ("manuscript rejection"); *botsu ni suru* = "reject/kill [an article]" and *botsu ni naru* = "[an article] is rejected/killed." *Narimashita* is the PL3 past form of *naru*.
- *hā* is a rather tentative *hai* ("yes"), here serving as vague acknowledgment that he has heard.

4

OL1: 1部 千円。
Ichibu sen-en.
one-(count) ¥1000
"A thousand yen a copy." (PL2)

Publication: ㊙ 新入社員 うらおもて
Maruhi Shinnyū Shain Ura-omote
top secret new employee back and front
Top Secret: This Year's Entering Class, The Inside Story

OL2: うーむ、買った!
Ūmu, katta!
(interj.) bought
"All right, sold!" (PL2)

- *-bu* is the counter suffix for publications, so *ichibu* is like "one copy."
- the kanji 秘 (from 秘密 *himitsu*, "secret") inside a circle is read *maruhi*; it's used as a symbol for "classified/top secret."
- *shinnyū* = "newly entered" and *shain* = "employees."
- *ura-omote* is literally "back and front," and it's used idiomatically to mean "the inside story."
- *katta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *kau* ("buy"). In this case, using the past form does not mean she has already bought one; it's a way of expressing how anxious she is to buy one.

OL進化論
オーエル
OL Shinkaron

by 秋月りす / Akizuki Risu

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1

A: おまえ の とこ の 新人 ＯＬ どう?
Omae no toko no shinjin ōeru dō?
you 's place of newcomer office lady how
"How's the new OL in your section doing?" (PL2)

B: うん、 がんばってる よ。
Un, ganbatteru yo.
yeah/uh-huh is working hard/doing well (emph.)
"She's doing pretty well." (PL2)

- *omae* is a rough, masculine word for "you." *No* between two nouns makes the first into a modifier for the second. When the first refers to a person, the *no* essentially makes a possessive, so *omae no* = "your."
- *toko* is a colloquial abbreviation of *tokoro* ("place," here referring to his particular workplace/section within the company).
- *shinjin* is literally "new person," and refers variously to a "rookie" in sports, a "new face" on the screen, or "fresh blood/a newcomer" in almost any group. Here it means "new employee."
- "OL," always written with Roman characters but pronounced *ōeru*, is a "word" coined by the Japanese from the initials of the English words "office lady"—referring to young female workers who handle most secretarial/menial tasks around an office.
- *un* is an informal "yes/uh-huh," which can be used to acknowledge a question even when it is not a yes-no question. It serves as a momentary pause or "warm-up" word while the speaker prepares to answer. The more formal *hai* ("yes") below is being used the same way.
- *ganbatteru* is a contraction of *ganbatte iru*, from *ganbaru* ("work/try hard").

2

A: かわいい?
Kawaii?
cute
"Is she cute?" (PL2)

B: んー、 よく わからない。
N–, yoku wakaranai.
(interj.) well don't know/can't tell
"Mmm, I can't tell very well."
"Well, it's hard to tell." (PL2)

- *yoku* is the adverb form of the adjective *ii/yoi* ("good/fine"); when it modifies a negative verb it means "[not] very well."

3

B: あと 1〜2ヵ月 しないと、
Ato ichi-nikagetsu shinai to,
more 1-2 months if not do/pass
はっきりした こと は 言えない な。
hakkiri shita koto wa ienai na.
clear thing as for can't say (emph.)
"I can't say anything clear until another month or two passes."
"It'll be another month or two before I can say anything for sure." (PL2)

- *ato* before a time span means "[that much] more time/[that much] longer."
- *-kagetsu* is the counter suffix for indicating the number of months.
- *shinai* is the negative form of *suru* ("do"); *suru* after a time span means "[that much time] passes." *To* makes a conditional "if" meaning, so *ichi-nikagetsu shinai to* is literally "if 1-2 months don't pass" → "until 1-2 months pass."
- *hakkiri shita* ("is clear/clearly defined") is the plain/abrupt past form of *hakkiri suru* ("become clear") → *hakkiri shita koto* = "a clear thing."
- *ienai* is the negative potential ("cannot") form of *iu* ("say").

4

B: どう、花粉症?
Dō, kafunsho?
how hay fever
"How's your hay fever?" (PL2)

OL: はい、今日 は すこし いい でス。
Hai, kyo wa sukoshi ii desu.
yes today as for a little good is
"It's a little better today." (PL3)

Sound FX: ずはーっ
Zuha!
(congested breathing)

おこがれデパ♡ギャル

Akogare Depa-Gyaru

Those Glamorous Salesgirls

by 大沼かおる / Ōnuma Kaoru

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1

OL: アルバイト の 小野さん です よ ね。
Arubaito no Ono-san desu yo ne.
part-time work[er] of (name-hon.) is/are (emph.) (colloq.)
"You're the part-timer, Miss Ono, right?" (PL3)

Part-timer: ハイ。
Hai.
yes
"Yes." (PL3)

- *arubaito* (from the German *Arbeit*, "work/job") is the Japanese word for "temporary/part-time work." It's also used to refer to the part-timer workers: *arubaito no Ono-san* = "Ms. Ono, the part-timer worker."

2

OL: 明日 一日 人事課 の お手伝い
Ashita ichinichi jinji-ka no o-tetsudai
tomorrow one day personnel section of/in (hon.)-helping
お願いします。
onegai shimasu.
(hon.)-request
"We'd like to ask you to help us out in the personnel section for a day tomorrow." (PL3)

Part-timer: え？ 人事課 の ですか？
E? Jinji-ka no desu ka?
huh? personnel section of/in is it?
"Oh? In the personnel section?" (PL3)

- the suffix *-ka* designates a "section" in the Japanese corporate structure, typically a subdivision of a *bu* ("department"). *Jinji-ka* = "personnel section."
- *tetsudai* is a noun form of the verb *tetsudau* ("help/assist"); the noun form commonly gets the honorific prefix *o-* even in informal speech. The particle *o*, to mark this as the object of *onegai shimasu*, has been omitted.
- *onegai* means "request" and adding a form of *suru* (*shimasu* is the PL3 form of *suru*) turns it into a verb: "make a request/ask a favor." When an object is specified, it essentially means "I request ～ of you"; when no object is specified, it's like "please."
- *e?* with the intonation of a question is like "huh?/oh?"
- *jinji-ka no* in the part-timer's response is understood to mean *jinji-ka no o-tetsudai* ("helping in the personnel section").

3

OL: ええ、 ただ 明日 この 場所 に
E, tada ashita kono basho ni
yes just/only tomorrow this place to
行ってくれれば いい んです。
itte kurereba ii n desu.
if go-(for us) is good (explan.)
"Yes, it is enough for you to just go to this place for us tomorrow."
"Yes, we just need you to go to this place tomorrow." (PL3)

FX: にこっ
Niko!
(effect of cheerful smile)

- *ē* is a less formal "yes" than *hai*, but it's still quite polite.
- *itte* is the *-te* form of *iku* ("go"), and *kurereba* is a conditional "if" form of *kureru*, which after the *-te* form of another verb implies the action is done for the benefit or at the behest of the speaker or subject.
- *-ba ii* makes an expression meaning "it is enough to ～/all you have to do is ～."

4

Sign: マルマル デパート 人事課
Marumaru Depato Jinji-ka
blank-blank dept. store personnel section
Marumaru Department Store Personnel Section

- *depāto* abbreviates *depātomento sutoa*, the cumbersome katakana rendering of the English "department store."
- *marumaru* (literally, "circle-circle" and often written ○○) is a common way of indicating a blank or a variable when writing Japanese, so *Marumaru Depāto* is essentially like "So-and-so Department Store."
- reserving a space for cherry-blossom parties is usually done by low-level employees, who often must use one of their paid vacations days. They have to arrive early in the morning and sit all day long to stake out a good spot. This company has just decided to use a temporary worker instead.

おこがれデパ♡ギャル

Akogare Depa-Gyaru

Those Glamorous Salesgirls

by 大沼かおる（おおぬま） / Ōnuma Kaoru

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1

OL1: うちの　お花見　は　来週　の　月曜　だ　から　ね。
Uchi no o-hanami wa raishū no getsuyō da kara ne.
our (hon.)-flower viewing as for next week of Monday is because/so (colloq.)
"Our flower-viewing party is next Monday, so [don't forget]."
"Remember, our flower-viewing party is next Monday." (PL2)

OL2: ハーイ。
Hāi.
yes/OK
"Ri-i-ght!" (PL2)

- *uchi* literally means "within/inside," but in many cases it's used to mean "our house/shop/company." *Uchi no* means "of/belonging to our house/shop/company," or simply, "our."
- unless the speaker specifies a different kind of flower, *hanami* (lit., "flower viewing") refers to viewing cherry blossoms—usually while having a party or picnic beneath them.
- ending her sentence with *da kara ne* (lit., "because it is ～") here gives it the feeling of a reminder.

2

Kashiwagi: 悪い　けど、私　その　日　用事　が　ある　から。
Warui kedo, watashi sono hi yōji ga aru kara.
bad but I/me that day business (subj.) have because/so
"Sorry but, because I have business that day, [I can't go]."
"Sorry, but I have something else I have to do that day." (PL2)

- *warui kedo* (lit., "it's bad [of me] but ～") is often used as an informal apology: "I'm sorry, but ～."
- *wa*, to mark *watashi* ("I/me") as the topic of the sentence, has been omitted.
- what comes before *kara* is the cause, and what follows is the effect; when the effect is negative, speakers often leave it implicit instead of stating it explicitly—as a way of "softening" the impact of their sentence.

3

OL1: 柏木さん　て　いつも　あー　言って、　飲み会　こない　の　よーっ。
Kashiwagi-san te itsumo ā itte, nomikai konai no yō!
(name-hon.) as for always like that say-and drinking parties not come (explan.) (emph.)
"Miss Kashiwagi is always saying that and not coming to our drinking parties."
"Miss Kashiwagi always makes excuses like that and refuses to come to our drinking parties." (PL2)

OL1: 協調性　が　ない　の　よ　ねー!
Kyōchō-sei ga nai no yo nē!
harmonizing quality (subj.) not have (explan.) (emph.) (emph.)
"She's lacking in harmony."
"She's such a party pooper!" (PL2)

OL2: まーまー。
Mā mā.
(interj.)
"Now, now." (PL2)

- *te* is a colloquial equivalent of the quotative *to*, but here it's essentially serving in place of the topic marker *wa*.
- *ā* here is equivalent to *ano yō ni* ("that way/like that") and *itte* is the *-te* form of *iu* ("say/speak"), so *ā itte* = "saying (things) like that."
- *konai* is the negative of *kuru* ("come"); *ni*, to mark *nomikai* ("drinking party") as the destination, has been omitted.
- *kyōchō suru* refers to acting in concert or harmonizing one's actions with others', and *-sei* is a suffix for "quality/characteristic." *Kyōchō-sei ga nai* (lit., "not have a harmonizing quality") here implies she's unwilling to go along with the others and socialize with them, so it essentially means "is standoffish/anti-social/a party pooper."
- *mā mā* is a gentle-sounding interjection that's used to try to calm someone down: "Now, now/Easy now/Yeah, yeah," etc.

4

Sign: カラオケ　教室
Karaoke Kyōshitsu
karaoke classroom
Karaoke Class

Kashiwagi: くそ～、　忘年会　までに　は～ . . .
(thinking) *Kuso–, bōnenkai made ni wa– . . .*
(expletive) year-end party by as for
Damn it, as for by the end-of-the-year party . . .
I've gotta get it together by the year-end party, damn it!
(PL2)

Kashiwagi: 春　よ～
(singing) *Haru yo–*
spring (address)
"Oh Spri-i-i-ing . . ."

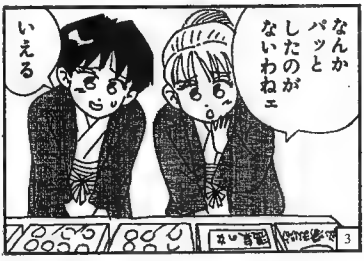
Instructor: あー、もっと　力　を　抜いて!
Ā–, motto chikara o nuite!
(interj.) more strength/force (obj.) withdraw/release
"Ahh, relax your strength more."
"Ahh, try to relax a bit more." (PL2)

- *kuso* is used widely as a curse of chagrin. Since it literally refers to "excrement," it's undeniably crude, but it's not considered objectionable to the extent of its counterparts in English—more like "damn it all!"
- end-of-the-year parties held by work units, student clubs, and other social groups in December are known as *bonenkai*, literally "forget-the-year parties." These days, karaoke is a virtually obligatory part of *bōnenkai* as well as *hanami* and most other drinking parties. Ms. Kashiwagi has apparently been bowing out because she's embarrassed about her karaoke talents.
- *chikara* = "strength/force" and *nuite* is the *-te* form of *nuku* ("pull out/withdraw"); *chikara o nuku* refers to relaxing/releasing the strength one has been exerting either purposely or inadvertently. Here it's a case of the latter.

にっぽんちゃちゃちゃ

Nippon Cha-Cha-Cha

by 山崎光佑 (やまざきこうすけ) / Yamazaki Kōsuke



1

A: ああ、 いい お湯 だ こと。
A, ii o-yu da koto.
(interj.) good/nice (hon.)-hot water/bath is thing
"Ahh, what nice hot water!"
"Ahh, the water feels great!" (PL2)

B: ホント。 最高 ネ。
Honto. Saikō ne.
truth/truly the best/tops (colloq.-is)
"Really! It doesn't get any better than this." (PL2)

- *da koto* is a feminine sentence-ending; *koto* (lit., thing) used this way adds light, colloquial emphasis, much like the feminine particle *wa* at the end of a sentence.
- *saikō* is a noun meaning "the highest/paramount/best," and *saikō ne* = "it's the best, isn't it?"
- they are at a hot springs resort (*onsen*).

2

A: そう だ。ヒロシ に おみやげ 買っていかなきゃ。
Sō da. Hiroshi ni o-miyage katte ikanakya.
that way is (name) for (hon.)-gift must buy-and-go
"Oh, yeah. I need to buy a present for Hiroshi." (PL2)

B: 私 も カズヤ に 何か 買っていかないと。
Watashi mo Kazuya ni nanika katte ikanai to.
I/me too (name) for something must buy-and go
"And I need to buy something for Kazuya." (PL2)

- *sō da* is literally "it is so/that way," but it's used idiomatically like "Oh, I know/Oh, that's right/Oh, yeah" when you have a sudden thought or when you remember something you intended or needed to do.
- *o-miyage* as used here refers to a gift or souvenir brought back from a trip. The word is also used for "housegifts" brought along when paying someone a visit.
- *katte* is the *-te* form of *kau* ("buy"), and both *ikanakya* (a contraction of *ikanakereba*) and *ikanai to* are colloquial "must/have to" forms of *iku* ("go"). A form of *iku* after the *-te* form of a verb implies doing the action before going or leaving.

3

A: なんか パッとした の が ない わねェ。
Nanka pa-tto shita no ga nai wa nē.
somehow shines/stands out one (subj.) not exist (fem. colloq.)
"Nothing really stands out, does it." (PL2)

B: いえる。
Ieru.
can say
"You can say that again." (PL2)

- *nanka* is a contraction of *nanika*, literally "something" but often used as a "softener," like "somehow/vaguely/kind of ~."
- *pa-tto shita* is a descriptive phrase referring to something that stands out as desirable, attractive, or impressive. As here, it's most typically used in negative sentences to say that something lacks those qualities, or that nothing stands out as particularly appealing.
- *no* is like the pronoun "one"; *pa-tto shita no* = "one that stands out/beckons."
- *nē* with a long vowel expresses the speaker's impression strongly.
- *ieru* is the potential ("can/be able to") form of *iu* ("say"). When it's used all by itself like this as an affirmation of what the other person has said, it's very much like "you can say that again."

4

A: この 灰皿 で いい か。
Kono haizara de ii ka.
this ashtray with is good (?)
"This ashtray will do, huh?" (PL2)

B: 私 は この 湯のみ にする ワ。
Watashi wa kono yunomi ni suru wa.
I/me as for this teacup will make it (fem. colloq.)
"I'll make [my gift] this teacup."
"I'll take this teacup." (PL2)

- ~ *de ii* (lit., "is good/fine with") is an expression meaning "~ is adequate/acceptable/fine" → "~ will do."
- ~ *ni suru* means "make it ~" in the sense of making a choice or selection.
- they are back in their room after having given up on souvenir shopping.

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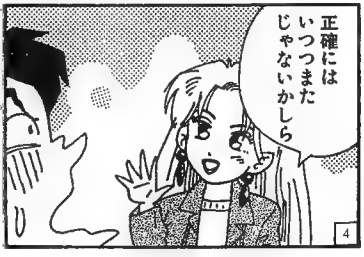
にっぽんちゃちゃちゃ

Nippon Cha-Cha-Cha

by 山崎光佑 (やまざきこうすけ) / Yamazaki Kōsuke



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1

Guy: オレの 他に みのる と も 付きあってた のか
Ore no hoka ni Minoru to mo tsukiatteta no ka?
I/me besides (name) with also were going out (explan.-?)
"Besides me, you were going out with Minoru, too?" (PL2)

Girl: ごめんなさい。
Gomen nasai.
(apology)
"I'm sorry." (PL2)

- *hoka* = "other"; *no hoka ni* = "other than/besides/in addition to."
- *tsukiatteta* is a contraction of *tsukiatte ita*, past form of *tsukiatte iru* ("am/is/are dating/going with"), from *tsukiau* ("date/go with"). *To* marks the person you are going with.
- *no ka* asks for an explanation.
- *gomen nasai* is one of the most common ways to express an apology.

2

Guy: ふたまたかける と は ずいぶん じゃないか。
Futamata kakeru to wa zuibun ja nai ka.
two-timing (quote) as for terrible/cruel is it not
"That you would two-time is terrible, is it not?"
"You've got some nerve—two-timing me!" (PL2)

- *mata* (股) refers to the "fork" where something that is single splits in two or more; *futa-* is from the generic counter *futatsu* ("two"), and *futamata* refers to a two-way fork (not two forks). *Futamata (o) kakeru* is an expression implying one is "straddling the fence/trying to have it both ways," or in matters of love, "two-timing."
- as an adverb modifying a verb or adjective, *zuibun* means "considerably/greatly," but as a noun (*zuibun na/da/desu/ja nai*) it means "thoughtless/terrible/hurtful."
- *ja nai ka* ("is it not?/does it not?") is a purely rhetorical question; he's in fact making a strong accusation: *zuibun ja nai ka* = "it is really hurtful/thoughtless/rude."

3

Girl: あッ！ それ は 違う ワ。
A! Sore wa chigau wa.
(interj.) that as for different/wrong (fem. colloq.)
"Oh, no! That's not it at all!" (PL2)

Girl: みのる の他に フミオ も いた し、
Minoru no hoka ni Fumio mo ita shi,
(name) besides (name) also existed and
ヒデキ、タカシ も いた から...
Hideki, Takashi mo ita kara...
(name) (name) also existed because/so
"Besides Minoru, there was also Fumio, and there were Hideki and Takashi, too, so..."

- *a!* indicates sudden awareness of something and can mean either "Oh!" or "Oh, no!" depending on the context.
- *chigau* literally means "differs/is different," but often implies "is wrong/mistaken/a misunderstanding."
- *ita* is the plain/abrupt past form of *iru* ("exists" for people and animate beings).
- *shi* is an emphatic "and/moreover."

4

Girl: 正確に は、いつつまた じゃない かしら。
seikaku ni wa, itsutsumata ja nai kashira.
accurately as for five-timing is it not perhaps
"isn't it perhaps more accurately five-timing?"
"more accurately you'd have to say I was five-timing you, don't you think?" (PL2)

- *seikaku* = "accuracy/precision," and *seikaku ni* = "accurately/precisely."
- one does hear of *mitsumata* (from *mittsu*, "three," and *mata*) and *yotsumata* (from *yottsu*, "four" and *mata*) for referring to three- and four-way forks (though not usually for three- or four-timing), so *itsutsumata* (from *itsutsu*, "five" and *mata*) is theoretically possible (e.g., to speak of the fingers on one's hand), but it's not an established word.
- *kashira* makes a question like "is it perhaps/I wonder if," but when you are directly addressing another person, it often has the feeling of "Do you think ~?" (after an affirmative statement) or "Don't you think ~?" (after a negative statement, as here).

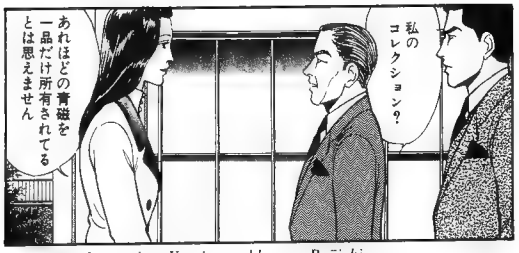
HIROMI, a long tall lady.

この女に賭ける

Part 8

Kono Hito ni Kakero
— Bet on this Woman —

作・週良貨　Story • **Shū Ryōka**
画・夢野一子　Art • **Yumeno Kazuko**



Harashima bumps into Kamiya and his son Ryūichi.

In events preceding this episode, 30-year-old Harashima Hiromi is transferred from the head office of Yotsuba Bank to a failing branch office. Her new position is Commercial Services representative—essentially a door-to-door "salesperson" for the bank.

Harashima's unconventional ways and forthright manner are shocking to her new colleagues. A rivalry soon develops between her and Mr. Katō, the star of the Commercial Services department, who despite two years of work has not been able to land the Shinwa Enterprises account. When Harashima brashly accepts the challenge of landing Shinwa in only two months, the tension between them escalates.

She researches her region—and Shinwa—by spending a few weeks just getting to know the neighborhood. While doing so, she comes across some interesting gossip: the president of Shinwa, Mr. Kamiya, is an art aficionado who has two sons working for him, one of whom is the product of an extramarital affair.

In Harashima's first meeting alone with a Shinwa executive, she is warned that the president, Mr. Kamiya, is fiercely loyal to their current bank and will never make the switch to Yotsuba. Then, on the way out, she bumps into Kamiya. Shrewdly questioning him about his art collection, she elicits an invitation to contact the vice president who is in charge of the collection—Takahiko, his legitimate son—for a tour.

Kamiya Takahiko takes Harashima and Katō on a tour.

It's an important meeting, a chance to reach the president through his son, so Harashima takes great pains to convince the hostile but knowledgeable Katō to accompany her. During the tour, the two learn that Kamiya was forced to give up his love for art in order to run the business. Takahiko was put in charge of the collection, with plans for him eventually to take over business operations. Unfortunately, he showed no aptitude for business, leading Kamiya to begin grooming his illegitimate son, Ryūichi (currently the General Manager of Shinwa), for the job. Harashima points out that while Takahiko may not have inherited his father's business sense, he did inherit his passion for art. "To build another Shinwa . . . isn't that your mission?" she queries. Takahiko has no idea what she means, but it becomes eminently clear in a subsequent meeting with Kamiya, his two sons, and accounting manager Kawahara.

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Preview Page

Here are some of the key vocabulary and grammar constructions found in the following story. We suggest previewing this section before you begin to prepare yourself for words, kanji, and patterns that are new to you. Many of these items do not appear again in the notes.

VOCABULARY

page 52

美術	*bijutsu*	art/the fine arts
分離する	*bunri suru*	separate/divide (*v.*)
具体策	*gutai-saku*	concrete plan
発展する	*hatten suru*	develop
本来の	*honrai no*	original/primary
事業	*jigyō*	undertaking/operations
活用する	*katsuyō suru*	use/apply
積極的	*sekkyoku-teki*	actively/aggressively
節税対策	*setsuzei taisaku*	tax-reduction strategy
使命	*shimei*	mission/appointed task
提示する	*teiji suru*	present/suggest/propose
財団	*zaidan*	foundation

page 53

愛好家	*aikōka*	aficionado/enthusiast
移管する	*ikan suru*	transfer control/jurisdiction
常套(の)	*jōtō (no)*	commonplace/well-worn
譲渡する	*jōto suru*	transfer [property]
寄付する	*kifu suru*	donate/contribute
効果的に	*kōka-teki ni*	effectively/beneficially
設立	*setsuritsu*	founding/establishment

page 53 (continued)

振興	*shinkō*	promotion
手段	*shudan*	means/method/device
相続	*sōzoku*	succession/inheritance
大差	*taisa*	substantial difference
ため	*tame*	purpose

page 54

辞める	*yameru*	quit/resign

page 55

跡取り	*atotori*	successor/heir
解決する	*kaiketsu suru*	settle/resolve
奴	*yatsu*	person (derogatory)

page 56

～向に	*ikko ni*	not at all/not in the least
事実	*jijitsu*	fact/the truth
介入する	*kainyū suru*	intervene/meddle
後継者	*kōkeisha*	successor
内情	*naijō*	internal conditions/affairs
提案	*teian*	proposal/suggestion

PATTERNS

- A かつ B ..... (A *katsu* B) ..... "both A and B"
- ～ことにより ..... (～ *koto ni yori*) ..... "by [the action of] ～"
- V + ことができる ..... (V + *koto ga dekiru*) ..... "[the action] can be done"
- A としてではなく B ..... (A *toshite de wa naku* B) ..... "not as A, but as B"
- ～ではないでしょうか ..... (～ *de wa nai deshō ka*) ..... "is it not perhaps ～ ?"
- V stem + かねて ..... (V stem + *kanete*) ..... "hesitate/be unable to [do the action]"

KANA QUICK REFERENCE

When a small circle is added to the upper right corner of the H-syllables, the first letter changes to a P-sound (e.g. は ‣ ぱ = ha → pa*).*

When the "voicing mark" (two lines that look like a double-quote mark) is added to the same position on K-, S-, T-, and H- syllables, the following sound changes occur: K → G, S → Z, T → D, and H ‣ B (e.g. こ → ご = ko → go*).*

The irregular consonants in shi, chi, *and* tsu *make their voiced equivalents irregular as well:* し ‣ じ = shi ‣ ji, ち → ぢ = chi → ji, *and* つ → づ = tsu ‣ zu.

Hiragana

あ	A	か	KA	さ	SA	た	TA	な	NA	は	HA	ま	MA	や	YA	ら	RA	わ	WA	ん	N
い	I	き	KI	し	SHI	ち	CHI	に	NI	ひ	HI	み	MI			り	RI				
う	U	く	KU	す	SU	つ	TSU	ぬ	NU	ふ	FU	む	MU	ゆ	YU	る	RU				
え	E	け	KE	せ	SE	て	TE	ね	NE	へ	HE	め	ME			れ	RE				
お	O	こ	KO	そ	SO	と	TO	の	NO	ほ	HO	も	MO	よ	YO	ろ	RO	を	O		

Katakana

ア	A	カ	KA	サ	SA	タ	TA	ナ	NA	ハ	HA	マ	MA	ヤ	YA	ラ	RA	ワ	WA	ン	N
イ	I	キ	KI	シ	SHI	チ	CHI	ニ	NI	ヒ	HI	ミ	MI			リ	RI				
ウ	U	ク	KU	ス	SU	ツ	TSU	ヌ	NU	フ	FU	ム	MU	ユ	YU	ル	RU				
エ	E	ケ	KE	セ	SE	テ	TE	ネ	NE	ヘ	HE	メ	ME			レ	RE				
オ	O	コ	KO	ソ	SO	ト	TO	ノ	NO	ホ	HO	モ	MO	ヨ	YO	ロ	RO	ヲ	O		

Combinations

きゃ	KYA	しゃ	SHA	ちゃ	CHA	にゃ	NYA	ひゃ	HYA	みゃ	MYA	りゃ	RYA
きゅ	KYU	しゅ	SHU	ちゅ	CHU	にゅ	NYU	ひゅ	HYU	みゅ	MYU	りゅ	RYU
きょ	KYO	しょ	SHO	ちょ	CHO	にょ	NYO	ひょ	HYO	みょ	MYO	りょ	RYO
キャ	KYA	シャ	SHA	チャ	CHA	ニャ	NYA	ヒャ	HYA	ミャ	MYA	リャ	RYA
キュ	KYU	シュ	SHU	チュ	CHU	ニュ	NYU	ヒュ	HYU	ミュ	MYU	リュ	RYU
キョ	KYO	ショ	SHO	チョ	CHO	ニョ	NYO	ヒョ	HYO	ミョ	MYO	リョ	RYO

1 Harashima:
シンワ商事にはふたつの使命があると思います。
"I think Shinwa Enterprises has two missions." (PL3)

- 商事 is a common part of company names for businesses large and small, something like "~ Enterprises."
- 使命 = "mission/appointed task"; 使命がある = "have/has a mission."

2 Harashima:
ひとつは本来の専門商社の事業を発展させること...
"One is to further develop its original specialized commercial operations."
"One is to grow within its current market niche."

Harashima:
今ひとつは神谷家が持っている資産を有効かつ積極的に活用することです。
"The other is to make use of Kamiya family assets profitably and aggressively."
"The other is to put the Kamiya family assets to the best possible use." (PL3)

- 専門 = "specialization/specialized," and 商社 = "commercial firm/trading company."
- 発展 = "development," and 発展する is its verb form, "develop." させる is the causative ("make/let") form of する.
- 本来の専門商社の事業を発展させる is a complete thought/sentence ("make develop the original specialized commercial operations") modifying こと (lit., "thing," but here more abstractly referring to an "action"). In Japanese, we can think of this either as the end of the sentence with です omitted, or as the first half of the sentence ending with です in the next balloon.
- 今ひとつ = "the other one."
- 持っている is from 持つ ("hold/own"); 神谷家が持っている is a complete thought/sentence ("the Kamiya family owns [them]") modifying 資産 ("assets").
- 有効 is a noun meaning "effectiveness," but here it links to 的に and functions as an adverb (有効的に) meaning "to/with good effect" ➧ "profitably/beneficially."
- かつ = "and/moreover."
- 積極的に = "actively/dynamically/aggressively."
- 活用 refers to using something toward a practical end, and 活用する is its verb form: "use/apply/put to use."

3 Ryūichi:
具体策を聞きましょうか?
"Shall we hear your specific proposals?"
"What specifically do you have in mind?" (PL3)

- 聞きましょう is the PL3 volitional ("let's/I shall," or in a question, "shall I/we?") form of 聞く ("listen to/hear").

4 Harashima:
シンワ商事から神谷家のこの美術品を分離して美術財団を作ります。
"Separate these art holdings of the Kamiya family from Shinwa Enterprises and establish an arts foundation." (PL3)

- 分離 = "separation/division," and 分離する is its verb form: "separate/divide"; して is the *-te* form of する, the *-te* form being used here to indicate the means/manner of the following action.

5 Ryūichi:
美術財団による節税対策なら丸菱銀行からも提示されていますよ。
"If it is a plan to reduce taxes by means of an arts foundation, it has been suggested by Marubishi Bank, too."
"If you're talking about using such a foundation as a tax shelter, then Marubishi Bank has already suggested the same." (PL3)

- 提示 = "presentation," and 提示する is its verb form: "present/suggest/propose." されています is the PL3 form of されている, from される, the passive form of する.

1 Vice President:
美術愛好家の常套手段だな。
"It's a time-worn device used by art collectors."
"That's one of the oldest tricks in the book among art collectors." (PL2)

Harashima:
はい。そして美術館の館長は副社長にお願いいたします。
"Yes. And we will ask the vice president to become the curator of the art museum." (PL4)

- 常套 = "conventionality," or as a modifier, "conventional/commonplace/hackneyed/well-worn."
- 手段 = "means/method/device."
- 館 (read やかた by itself but かん in combinations) refers to a "large/public building," and is the final element in many words referring to theaters/assembly halls/sports facilities/museums, etc. 美術館 = "art museum."
- 長 is a suffix meaning "head/chief/leader," and the chief officer in charge of any building with a name ending in 館 is called 館長.

2 Harashima:
美術品を会社から財団に移管することにより、会社の資産を減らすことができます。
"By transferring ownership of the art objects from the corporation to the foundation, you can reduce the corporation's assets." (PL3)

- 移管 refers to "transfer of control/jurisdiction," in this case implying "transfer of ownership"; adding する makes a verb.
- ～により = "by means of ～," and こと again means "action," so ～ことにより is literally "by the action of ～."
- ことができます is the PL3 form of ことができる; the plain form of a verb plus ことができる is equivalent to the potential ("can/be able to") form of the verb.

3 Harashima:
また、自社株を寄付すれば、相続株数の一部を効果的に譲渡できますね。
"Also, by donating your treasury stocks [to the foundation], you can beneficially transfer a portion of the stocks to be inherited." (PL3)

Ryūichi:
丸菱のプランと大差ありませんが...
"What you're suggesting isn't much different from Marubishi's plan." (PL3)

- 自社株 (lit., "the company's own stock") refers to "treasury stock"—stock the company has repurchased after issuing it.
- 寄付 = "donation/contribution," and adding する makes its verb form. すれば is a conditional "if" form of する.
- 効果的 = "effectively/efficiently/beneficially."

3 *(continued)*

- 譲渡できます is the PL3 form of 譲渡できる, the potential ("can/be able to") form of 譲渡する ("transfer [property]").
- 大差 means "great discrepancy/substantial difference/wide margin," and ありません is the PL3 form of ない ("not exist"), so 大差ありません = "there is no great difference."
- が = "but"; it's often used at the end of a sentence like this with the feeling of "but how do you respond to that?"

4 Harashima:
私たちは美術財団設立に、節税対策としてではなく、美術振興という積極的な意味を持たせます。
"We will be handling the establishment of the arts foundation not just as a tax-reduction strategy but to actively promote the arts." (PL3)

Harashima:
そのために...
"For that purpose . . ."

(continued on next page)

4 *(continued from previous page)*

- ～として = "as ～," and ではなく is a continuing form of ではない ("is not"), so it's like "is not ～, but ～." The combination Aとしてではなく B becomes "not as A, but as B."
- XというY often indicates that X is a more specific description or name for Y; here it indicates that 美術振興 ("arts promotion/advancement") is what she specifically means by 積極的な意味 ("active/positive significance").
- 持たせます is the PL3 form of 持たせる, the causative ("make/let") form of 持つ ("hold/carry"). 意味を持たせる is literally "make it hold/carry significance," and 美術振興という積極的な意味を持たせる = "make it carry the active/positive significance of arts promotion" → "actively promote the arts."
- ため when speaking of a future action means "purpose."

5 **Kawahara:**

やることはいっしょじゃないか。
"What is to be done is the same, is it not?"
"But what you'd actually have us do is the same." (PL2)

- やる is an informal word for "do"; やること = "thing that is done/to be done."
- いっしょ here means "the same" rather than the more familiar "together/alongside/with."
- じゃないか asks a question: "Is it not?/Does it not?" But it's often a purely rhetorical question and serves in fact as a strong assertion, typically with an irritated, accusatory, or scolding tone. He's essentially accusing her of wasting their time by trying to put a different face on what are in fact the same old devices any bank would suggest.

1 **Harashima:**

いいえ。
"No." (PL3)

Harashima:

副社長(ふくしゃちょう)にはシンワ商事(しょうじ)を辞(や)めていただきます。
"We will ask the vice president to resign from Shinwa Enterprises." (PL3)

- 辞めて is the *-te* form of 辞める ("quit"—when written with this kanji it means specifically "quit work/resign from office").
- いただきます is the PL3 form of いただく ("receive"); いただく after the *-te* form of a verb could literally be translated as "[I/we] receive the favor of [the action]," and it implies that someone of higher status than the speaker does/will do the action at the speaker's request or as a favor to the speaker.

1 Katō: (thinking)

ムチャクチャ(めちゃくちゃ)な奴(やつ)だな、こいつは!!

She sure is an unreasonable/reckless person, this one!

What's gotten into this woman? Is she mad?! (PL3)

- ムチャクチャ is an informal word for "disorder/confusion/mixed up"; and adding な to modify a noun typically makes it "absurd/unreasonable/reckless/mad."
- 奴 is an informal/slang word for referring to a person or thing, often with a derogatory feeling (though it can also be used with a feeling of endearment). こいつ is a contraction of この奴, "this person/guy," and は marks it as the topic of the sentence.
- the syntax is inverted; the topic would normally come first, and the sentence would end with だな—the な adding colloquial emphasis.

2 Kawahara:

し…しかし、シンワの跡取(あとと)りは隆彦(たかひこ)さん、

"B-but, the heir to Shinwa is Takahiko . . ."

Kawahara:

いや、副社長(ふくしゃちょう)だ。

"I mean, the vice president." (PL2)

- 跡取り = "successor/heir."
- rules of formality usually require employees to refer to their superiors by title, especially when speaking with outsiders

3 Harashima:

それこそがシンワ商事(しょうじ)が解決(かいけつ)すべき一番(いちばん)の課題(かだい)ではないでしょうか。

"That, indeed, is the first issue that Shinwa Enterprises must resolve, is it not?"

"Is that not the very issue Shinwa Enterprises most needs to resolve?" (PL3)

Sound FX:

コッコッ

(sound of shoe heels clicking against floor)

Kawahara:

なに?

"What?" (PL2)

- こそ emphasizes それ ("that") with the feeling of "none other than that" → "that, indeed." The first が marks それ as the subject of the main sentence: それこそが . . . 課題ではないでしょうか.
- 解決 = "settlement/resolution/decision," and 解決する = "settle/resolve." すべき is a "should/ought to" form of する, so 解決すべき = "should resolve." The second が marks シンワ商事 as the subject of this verb → "Shinwa Enterprises should resolve [it]."
- 課題 means "subject/theme," but it's often used idiomatically for "problem [to be resolved]/task [to be completed]/goal [to be achieved]." シンワ商事が解決すべき and 一番の ("the first") both modify 課題.

3 *(continued)*

- using a negative question like ではないですか (or じゃないですか—"is it not 〜?") to make one's point is more polite because it sounds less assertive; making it a conjectural negative by using でしょう ("perhaps/probably is") instead of です ("is") makes it even more polite.

4 Kamiya:

どういう意味(いみ)ですかな?

"What kind of meaning is it, I wonder?"

"What might you mean by that?" (PL3)

- どういう = "what kind of," so どういう意味 is literally "what kind of meaning." どういう意味? (PL2) and どういう意味ですか? (PL3) are expressions for asking, "What do you mean (by that)?" Using かな instead of a plain か gives it a conjectural feeling: "What might you mean?"

1 Harashima:
丸菱の提案にもかかわらず節税対策が一向に進んでいないのはなぜなのでしょう。
"I wonder why it might be that your tax reduction strategies have not progressed at all in spite of Marubishi's proposals?"
"I wonder why it is that your tax reduction strategies have gone nowhere in spite of Marubishi's proposals?" (PL3)

Harashima:
社長が後継者を決めかねておられるからではありませんか。
"Is it not because you remain undecided about your successor?" (PL4)

- 提案 = "proposal/suggestion."
- ～にもかかわらず = "in spite of ～."
- 一向に = "not at all/not in the least."
- 進んでいない is the negative form of 進んでいる ("is progressing/has progressed"), from 進む ("advance/progress/move forward").
- の makes everything before it act like a single noun, and は marks that noun as the topic of the sentence: "as for your tax strategies not progressing at all in spite of Marubishi's proposal . . ."
- なぜ = "why"; ～はなぜなの (lit., "as for ～, why is it?") is like "why is it that ～?"
- でしょう after a question word but spoken without the intonation of a question asks something like "I wonder who/what/how, etc., [it] might be?" But often the conjectural form is used more for politeness than true conjecture.
- 社長 is literally "company president," but she's using the title to refer directly to her listener here, so it's essentially equivalent to "you."
- 決め is the stem form of 決める ("decide/choose"), and -かねて is the *-te* form of -かねる, which attaches to the stem of a verb to mean "hesitate/be unable to [do the action]." おられる is a PL4 honorific equivalent of いる, which after the *-te* form of a verb indicates a continuing action or state. Here it is his state of indecision that continues → "[you] remain undecided."
- から = "because."
- ではありませんか = じゃありませんか = じゃないか ("is it not?").

2 Kawahara:
き. . . 君は他人の会社の内情に介入するつもりか?!
"D-do you intend to intervene in the internal affairs of someone else's company?!"
"D-do you intend to meddle in the internal affairs of our company?!" (PL2)

- 君 is an informal word for "you" generally used only by males when addressing equals or subordinates.
- 他人 means "another person/stranger/someone else" whether it is read ひと, as indicated here, or たにん, which is its more proper reading. Adding の makes it possessive: "someone else's." In this case he is referring to his own company, which to Harashima is "someone else's" company.
- 内情 = "internal conditions/circumstances/affairs."

2 *(continued)*
- 介入する = "intervene/meddle."
- つもり = "intent/intention"; 介入するつもり = "intend/plan to intervene."

3 Vice President:
いいじゃないですか。事実なんだから。
"It's fine, is it not? Since it's the truth."
"Never mind that. What she says is true." (PL3)

- いい = "good/fine/OK," and じゃないですか asks "is it not?" いいじゃないですか asks a rhetorical question: "Is that not fine/OK?", assuming the answer "Yes, it is." It's often used to respond to criticism, with the feeling of "why should that matter?/why worry about that?/never mind that." (Cf. the negative form of the adjective いい, which is よくない, "not good/fine.")
- 事実 = "fact/the truth"; the syntax is inverted. Normal order would be 事実なんだからいいじゃないですか.

To be continued . . .

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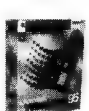

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HARRISON-SAN! YOU'RE LATE FOR WORK!

Gaijin Celebrities in Japanese Ads

By David Lazarus

The manager and staff of a Japanese company are seen anxiously pacing the office, awaiting news of an important business deal. Suddenly, none other than Harrison Ford rushes in with a broad smile on his face. He announces that they've landed the big contract.

The colleagues, Ford included, are next shown toasting their success with Kirin beer.

While Hollywood stars have appeared for many years in Japanese commercials—and been well paid for it—advertising industry executives say the Kirin campaign marks something of a turning point. For the first time, a major movie star is being depicted not as a glamorous celebrity but as an ordinary "salaryman" working for a typical Japanese company.

"Japanese are seen as the boss, and he's the subordinate," observes Tsuji Akira, a spokesman for the Japan Advertising Federation, an industry association. "This is unprecedented."

Demi Moore Sells Shampoo

The Kirin campaign also reflects the grittier reality of Japan's economy, which has been mired in a recession since the early '90s. The free-spending days of the country's "bubble years" are over.

"After the bubble popped, Japanese people became more down to earth," says Aizawa Hidekazu, senior manager of the Creative Management Division at Dentsū, Inc., Japan's largest ad agency. "Commercials are now talking on a more person-to-person level."

Not all of them. A number of A-list Hollywood stars can still be seen pitching Japanese products in more traditional I-use-this-and-so-should-you endorsements.

Sylvester Stallone Sells Ham

Andy Garcia and Jodie Foster sell cars. Madonna and Sean Connery sell liquor. Arnold Schwarzenegger sells energy drinks. Eddie Murphy sells canned coffee. Demi Moore sells shampoo. Sharon Stone sells cosmetics. And, of course, there's Sylvester Stallone, who seems a particularly apt choice for commercials that sell ham.

According to advertising industry sources, a top star can make between $3 million and $5 million for a one-year contract. Most contracts include a stipulation that the commercials not be shown outside Japan. They also specify that if the celebrity is involved in a scandal during the course of a campaign, the ads will be pulled and the cash must be returned.

"There's a risk for the advertisers," says Aizawa. "If these people are found to use drugs or something like that, that can make a lot of negative publicity."

Usually, though, it's easy money. Often, the celebrity doesn't even have to fly to Japan. An entire camera crew, plus a popular young Japanese starlet, Miyazawa Rie, traveled to Los Angeles so she could be filmed with Schwarzenegger in commercials for Arinamin V, a leading health tonic.

In the Kirin campaign, footage of Harrison Ford was reportedly digitally inserted into an ad that showed him sharing a steam bath with a Japanese colleague.

Despite Japan's economic slump, the importance of celebrity advertising has not diminished. The average TV commercial runs only 15 seconds, and thus image is usually a more important factor than information. According to industry figures, no fewer than two-thirds of Japanese ad campaigns center on the presence of a well-known star, either Japanese or foreign.

"At the end of the day, you're better off getting a celebrity for your ad, even someone as expensive as Harrison Ford,"

Vanessa Williams touting Sedes, an over-the-counter painkiller

says Ned Russell, international client service director for the Hakuhodo Lintas agency. "To break through, an ad must create a smile. Using a celebrity is a good bet."

According to Russell, foreign celebrities flock to Japanese advertisers because, aside from the piles of money, they know that no stigma is attached to appearing in commercials. "Japan is Hollywood's second-biggest market, and consumers in Japan are fascinated by celebrities. A star like Harrison Ford can therefore create a friendlier perception of himself by doing ads and so enhance his box-office appeal."

Even in this age of satellite broadcasting and the Internet, foreign celebrities by and large remain unconcerned about being perceived at home as a bunch of unprincipled sellouts. "Japan remains something of an isolated island nation," Russell says. "Most people in the West still don't get to see these ads, so celebrities can make the money and protect their image."

Because of the proliferation of American movie stars in Japanese advertising, it's interesting to note the precious few who have yet to make an appearance. Kevin Costner, Julia Roberts, Tom Cruise, and Keanu Reeves are among a select handful of top stars who have yet to turn up as corporate salespeople.

One advertising industry executive says he understands that Roberts, Cruise, and Reeves are in fact available for advertising, but they are either too expensive or have yet to find a suitable campaign. Only Costner seems to have so far refused to appear in Japanese ads.

On the other hand, there's Charlie Sheen, who is willing to sell virtually anything. In recent years, Sheen has appeared in ads for a bewildering variety of products, including shoes, clothing, and household appliances. He was most recently seen selling cigarettes.

"Charlie Sheen understands that Japanese audiences love him," says Dentsū's Aizawa. "He might not be as popular in the US, but here he is very big with younger people."

And that's something a foreign celebrity can take to the bank. ❖

David Lazarus is a freelance writer based in Tokyo.

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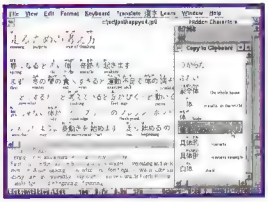

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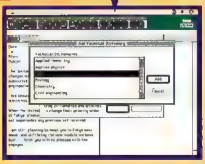

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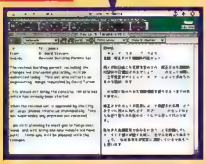

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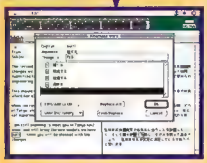

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book review

The Modern Madame Butterfly

Fantasy and Reality in Japanese Cross-Cultural Relationships

Karen Ma
Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1996

by Ginny Skord Waters

Back when the most cross-cultural contact between Japanese and Americans took place in close proximity to a naval outpost, the melodramatic hyperbole of faithful Madame Butterfly and her deceitful American lieutenant came to define every Japanese-American love match. Old stereotypes die hard, and even into the postmodern '90s most foreigners still accept and even perpetuate Japanese gender images that were never very accurate to start with. With the ever-mounting waves of yen-seeking foreigners washing up on Japanese shores, and the hordes of yen-laden Japanese tourists and business types regularly surging over every continent of the known world, it is not surprising that the sheer frequency of cross-cultural social intercourse should have created a boom in the international marriage market. *The Modern Madame Butterfly*, Karen Ma's inquiry into the nature of cross-cultural pairings, aims both to bash long-cherished myths and to set the record straight. On both counts the book is successful, but one wonders if the product had to be quite so exhaustive and exhausting.

Less a cohesive book than a series of long articles, *The Modern Madame Butterfly* reads like in-flight magazine journalism, the kind that thrives on a captive audience, but which can't sustain interest over the long haul—in this case, a haul of almost 300 pages. In fact, it is rather surprising that this ostensibly juicy subject should be accorded such a plodding, mechanical treatment. Relying on a wealth of statistics bolstered by case studies and quotations from subjects, Ma methodically builds her case line by line, with every topic heralded in subheadings, painstakingly introduced, explained at length, then once again summarized, creating a structure not unlike the classic writer's guideline: say what you're going to say, then say what you said you were going to say, then say that you told them what you were going to tell them. Such an approach invariably leads to repetitiveness—here, of both ideas and statistics. The banal language use ("only time will tell how these marriages will work out") and surfeit of platitudes ("unfortunately, women with little self-confidence think that sex is the only way to win a man") only exacerbate the lack of verve or color.

Despite the stylistic unpalatability, *The Modern Madame Butterfly* is nonetheless important reading. Not only does Ma debunk a number of stale myths, but in so doing she reveals the startling changes that Japanese gender roles and expectations have undergone within the last ten years or so. The first cherished myth to fall is that of the compliant and victimized Japanese woman. In an age when three of every four divorces are initiated by the female, 40 percent of all women are still unmarried by the age of 29, and the notorious "yellow cab" phenomenon (in which Japanese women supposedly cruise foreign lands for easy male pickups) is splashed all over the headlines, you wonder what happened to the old-fashioned Japanese girl next door. The answer, Ma tells us, is that she is no more.

Now, in the Japanese *fin de siècle*, a surplus of young men is assiduously courting a shrinking pool of ever-more-fastidious women who are perfectly willing to hold out for the "three highs": high salary, high education, and height of at least 5'11". To these women, a conventional marriage represents only drudgery and self-sacrifice; besides, as one of the women interviewed says, Japanese men are boring—all they can talk about is work. At the same time, Japanese women are not at all eager to join men in the daily white-collar grind, and see marriage as an escape from the obligation to work. In short, they don't want men's jobs, but like the income; they don't want old mores, but are uncertain about how to blaze new social paths. One begins to sniff some whining in the air, and, indeed, several of the case studies reveal just how spoiled some of these affluent hothouse flowers have become. Mari, for example, is not interested in becoming a career woman but "would rather settle for having fun." Since she finds Japanese society "oppressive," she plans to tour Europe after graduation from college, where, she says, she'll "take up Spanish or something."

Small wonder, then, that *gaijin* men are seen as an attrac-

• proximity = 近く／付近 *chikaku/fukin* • hyperbole = 誇張 *kochō* • deceitful = うそつきの *usotsuki no* • perpetuate = 受け伝える　永続させる *uketsutaeru/eizoku saseru* • cohesive = まとまりのある *matomari no aru* • bolstered by = ～に支えられた ～ *ni sasaerareta* • banal = 新鮮味のない　陳腐な *shinsenmi no nai/chinpu na* • debunk = （誤った説を）くつがえす／正体を暴く *(ayamatta setsu o) kutsugaesu/shōtai o abaku* • fin de siècle = 世紀末 *seiki-matsu*

tive alternative. Not just any *gaijin* man, but one with a proper income and station in life; servicemen and English teachers are out of luck. The foreign male, particularly one with blond hair and blue eyes, has become a fashion accessory—"almost like buying a Gucci bag," according to one Japanese woman. Some of these men are only too willing to cooperate, leaving a string of broken hearts in their wake; others fall in love and marry, only to wake up and find themselves married to archetypal bitches from hell (see, for example, Fumiko in chapter six). For the record, still others are happily married—but fewer than you might think.

Moving on to bash another long-cherished myth, Ma maintains that in the building of the Japanese economic megalith, men, "manipulated by both companies and wives," have made the greater sacrifice. To those who persist in thinking that Japanese men are insufferably arrogant and domineering, Ma correctly and wisely observes that in modern Japan, "the forms remain while the contents have changed." In response to the bad press given Japanese males, one foreign woman wed to a Japanese comments that "most of the books about Japan have been written by Western male observers. And these men often listen to Japanese women, who continue to tell them how terrible Japanese men are." While the *gaijin* "trophy wife," analog to the Gucci-bag *gaijin* boyfriend, is not unheard of, by and large the much-maligned foreign woman–Japanese man match seems to generate a higher degree of satisfaction than that of foreign man–Japanese woman.

For a book so devoted to myth-busting, it is unfortunate that the author all too often blames the failure of cross-cultural marriages on cliches like "general lack of understanding between partners of each other's culture and social circumstances." While such observations are not without merit, surely the issue is more complex. For my money, language lies somewhere near the heart of it. Ma cites the influence of language several times, but never really comes to grips with just how powerfully it can determine the nature of a relationship. She sees the foreign husband's ability to speak his wife's language as a strengthener of the relationship, and the foreign wife's general inability to speak Japanese as a marital weakness, but if, as Ma argues elsewhere, the latter combination is the more durable, it may be so precisely because it is carried out in a language not so prone to gender stereotyping. The foreign Japanese-speaking male may actually be perpetuating traditional marital roles through language (*"Oi, kimi, biiru motte kite kure"*), while the English-speaking foreign wife is able to maintain a certain sociolinguistic parity with her husband. On the other hand, I could be wrong, and, as Ma would have it, the more we come to know each other across the Pacific, the more common successful cross-cultural marriages will become. But when eternal mysteries between the sexes are confounded by culture, the going will never be completely smooth. ❖

***Ginny Skord Waters** is associate professor of Asian Studies at Manhattanville College.*

• archetypal = 原型的な *genkei-teki na* • bitch = たちの悪い女 *tachu no warui onna* • megalith = 巨石遺構、転じて大国、大企業など *kyosekı ukō, tenjite taikoku, daikıgyō nado*

On the Bookshelf

Tuttle Dictionary of the Martial Arts of Korea, China, and Japan, *by Sun-Jin Kim, Daniel Kogan, Nikolaos Kontogiannis, and Hali Wong. Boston: Charles E. Tuttle Co, Inc., 1996. 320 pages, $12.95 (softcover)*
For the martial arts enthusiast who wants more than a mere vocabulary list, this book gives detailed descriptions of the techniques, weapons, styles, people, and culturally relevant terminology in the martial arts. Includes entries from Japanese, Okinawan, Mandarin, Cantonese, and Korean.

The Hokkaido Fishermen's Liberation Movement, *by Takatoshi Ando; translated by Naoyuki Tao and James Colyn. New York: Vantage Press, 1995. 75 pages, $8.95 (softcover)*
Subtitled "The philosophy and works of Takatoshi Ando, the pioneer of the fishery cooperative movement in Hokkaido, Japan," this book recounts the transformation of Hokkaido fishermen from near-slavery to self-sufficiency.

The Dark Side of Japanese Business, *by Ikko Shimizu; edited and translated by Tamae K. Prindle. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1995. 296 pages, $50 (hardcover); $19.95 (softcover)*
Three works from the business-novel genre so popular in Japan. The first two, written in the late 1960s, shed light on the position of women in the business world: "Silver Sanctuary," about the fate of two bankers who learn the surprising dangers of being *too* successful; and "The Ibis Cage," in which a newly initiated geisha juggles the demands of clients involved in a bribery scandal. The third, "Keiretsu," is a muckraking novel written in 1986. It tells the story of an aging president of a medium-sized auto parts supplier who is struggling to stay independent despite the greedy demands of the mega-corporation that heads his *keiretsu*.

Women, Media and Consumption in Japan, *by Lise Skov & Brian Moeran. University of Hawaii Press, 1996. 318 pages, $19.95 (softcover); $39.00 (hardcover)*
Essays by leading scholars examining images of women in the Japanese media. Our favorite essay: "Cuties in Japan," which explains the origins and everlasting appeal of such charming oddities as Hello Kitty. Also includes:
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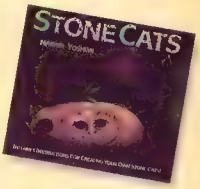

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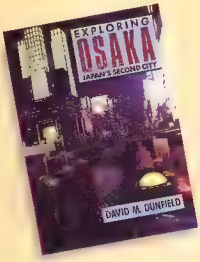

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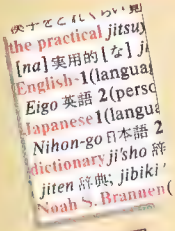

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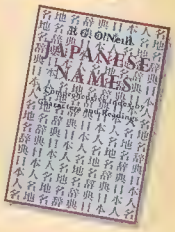

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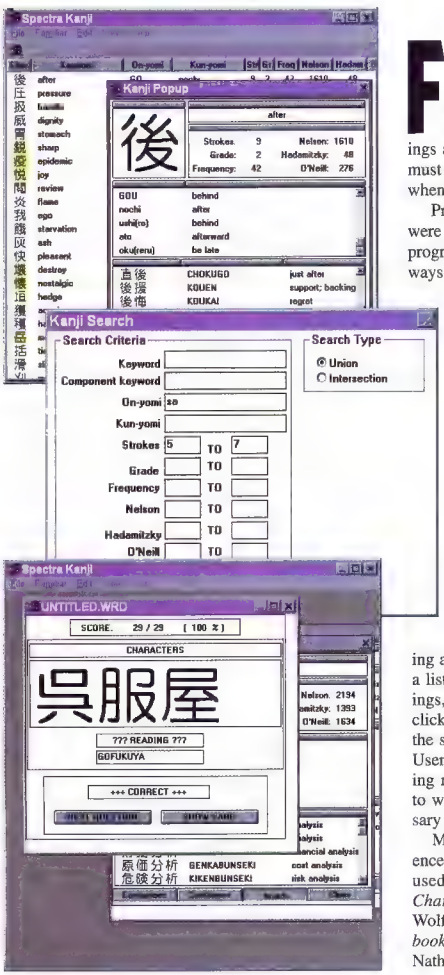

For Japanese-language students, learning kanji can be a formidable task. To begin with, they must memorize approximately 2,000 individual characters, many of which have multiple readings and meanings. As if this were not enough to grapple with, they must then master all of the various readings and meanings that result when characters are combined into kanji compounds.

Prior to the advent of computer-aided instruction (CAI), flashcards were the cutting-edge, high-tech approach to kanji learning. CAI kanji programs represent a significant alternative to flashcards, offering new ways to organize and learn characters. But there are problems with the CAI kanji programs currently on the market. Many of them are designed around their own approach to Japanese language learning, providing little flexibility for users who want to create kanji drills based on characters they are learning in a Japanese-language class or from a book. Further, many programs are limited to only a few hundred characters.

The Spectra Kanji Approach

Paradigm Research Corporation's Spectra Kanji is a CAI kanji program that takes a different approach to character learning from that taken by most other kanji applications. The program provides readings and meanings for 2,111 kanji and information on the component elements from which all kanji are composed. It also includes 5,005 common character compounds. Rather than impose its own lesson plan, Spectra Kanji lets users organize characters into groups of their own choosing.

Spectra Kanji is a highly structured system for categorizing and learning kanji. For example, in "Card View," users are given a list of the *on* (Sino-Japanese) and *kun* (Japanese) readings, meanings, and elements that make up a particular target character. With a click of the mouse, users can navigate to other characters that contain the same element or to compounds made up of the target character. Users can move quickly through information about a character, finding related characters and compounds. The number of strokes used to write each kanji is also given, but, oddly, the stroke order necessary to write the character correctly is omitted.

Most kanji learners realize early in their studies that kanji reference works are critical survival tools. Among the most frequently used are P.G. O'Neill's *Essential Kanji: 2,000 Basic Japanese Characters Systematically Arranged for Learning and Reference*, Wolfgang Hadamitzky and Mark Spahn's *Kanji and Kana: A Handbook and Dictionary of the Japanese Writing System*, and Andrew Nathaniel Nelson's aged but indispensable *The Modern Reader's Japa-*

nese-English Character Dictionary. Spectra Kanji, recognizing the widespread use of such volumes, provides the reference number that each gives to a character. The program's inclusion of these indices allows students to easily create groups of kanji based on characters they are currently studying from these works.

For those curious about the order in which Japanese students study kanji, Spectra Kanji offers a "Grade" index that specifies the grade level at which a character would be taught in a Japanese school. Thus, the user can look up all characters learned, say, at the third-grade level, group them together, and quiz himself on them. A "Frequency" index is another useful device. It lists characters by how often they appear in newspapers according to a 1976 study by Japan's National Language Research Institute. Grouping characters by frequency enables students to concentrate on the characters they are likely to encounter most often in newspapers and magazines.

Viewing Kanji

Spectra Kanji offers several ways to view kanji groups. The "List View" permits users to see all the characters in a particular group. The user can click on a character to obtain more information about that kanji. The "Table View" presents fewer characters at once, but it also displays information on their meanings, readings, and other selected attributes. Because "Table View" allows users to select what information is displayed, students can test themselves on the readings and meanings of characters or on their ability to write a character.

Like the "Table View," the "Card View" gives users a choice of what information will be shown. However, the "Card View" contains much more information about individual kanji than the "Table View," including related characters, character elements, and compound words. Most users will access "Card View" more than any other view mode because it allows for systematic browsing through kanji groups. By hiding certain information, users can quiz themselves on the aspects—readings, meanings, character elements—of characters they find most difficult.

Problems with Spectra Kanji

Spectra Kanji is a powerful resource for kanji learning, but it has some flaws. Students will be attracted to the program's self-testing mode, which randomly selects a character from a group and asks the user to identify its readings, meanings, or character elements. Stating the correct meaning of a character, however, can be a frustrating experience, since the user must input a character's meaning exactly as Spectra Kanji itself lists it. For example, Spectra Kanji knows the character *ki* as used in the compound *hikōki* ("airplane") as "mechanism." A student may likely have learned this character as "machine" since that is one of the meanings listed in both the O'Neill and the Hadamitzky and Spahn references. Although both "mechanism" and "machine" are perfectly acceptable definitions for *ki*, Spectra Kanji will mark "machine" as an incorrect answer.

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The program boasts relatively simple character selection tools. Nevertheless, students who wish to build kanji groups based on a textbook or some other set of preferences will spend considerable time doing so. Fortunately, once created, groups can be saved so the chore does not have to be repeated. The lack of any guidance in writing kanji, especially the order in which strokes should be written, is pedagogically more problematic. Spectra Kanji does provide the total number of strokes for each character, but this is insufficient for learning stroke order, which is necessary in order to write characters correctly. Students will have to augment Spectra Kanji with another reference if they want to learn how to write kanji.

One serious omission from Spectra Kanji is the absence of hiragana and katakana. Instead of using kana, the program displays all kanji readings in roman letters. Students miss the opportunity to associate kanji with their kana "spellings." This shortfall may be a technical tradeoff for the program's ability to run on computers without a Japanese operating system, but it is an unfortunate compromise.

Spectra Kanji has an online help file in place of a printed manual. The help file is adequate to cover questions about how to operate the program, but it is useless to those who are having trouble installing the program in the first place. Fortunately, installation is usually easy, though users will have to refer to the "Read Me" file to understand Spectra Kanji's rather odd copy-protection scheme. The program's copy protection presents some minor difficulties at the time of initial installation and when moving Spectra Kanji from machine to machine. The copy-protection scheme has no effect on daily operation on the same machine.

Recommendation

Spectra Kanji is a useful tool for students who seek additional assistance learning the complexities of the Japanese writing system. Though the program is certainly useful as a stand-alone kanji reference, it is a particularly valuable resource when used in conjunction with a formal Japanese-language course. Students who take advantage of Spectra Kanji's self-testing capabilities will notice rapid improvement in their kanji comprehension, and may even be willing to throw out their kanji flashcards. ❖

Spectra Kanji
Windows version requires Microsoft Windows 3.1 or Windows 95, 4 MB RAM, 5 MB hard disk space
$199
(Macintosh version available soon)

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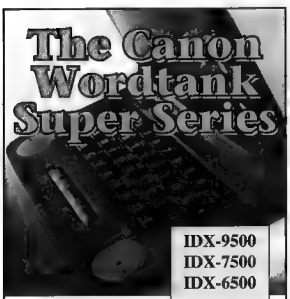

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WAKAME

Sustenance from the Sea

by Robbie Swinnerton

Of all the marine algae that feature in the Japanese diet, *wakame* (わかめ) is perhaps the most accessible. For a start, it looks something like a land plant: it has an unmistakable leaflike form, and, even better, it's the right color—not perhaps the bright chlorophyl green of watercress or chard, but green nonetheless. It somehow seems more appetizing than, say, *hijiki* (ひじき), with its black, stringy tendrils, or *kombu* (昆布), with its thick, brown, leathery blades.

Wakame has been a basic food for thousands of years, and it is still eaten by farmer and fisherman, businessman and bank clerk alike, as often as three times a day. The plant grows prolifically along most of Japan's coastline, in the shallow waters of sheltered bays. But little of it is wild; in fact, almost all of the commercial harvest is the product of intense cultivation. Over the past 50 years, phytoculture has become a science, and *wakame* farming is as reliable and straightforward as any land-based agriculture—indeed, it is probably more predictable, as the ocean suffers far less from temperature fluctuations or sudden infestations of pests. No fertilizers are needed either, since the warm currents that bathe Japan's coastline are rich in nutrients.

Most *wakame* is cultivated from submerged nets by a technique known as the *noren* method (the swirling swatches of seaweed are thought to resemble the half-length curtains, called *noren*, that drape the entrances to Japanese restaurants and shops). During the autumn, the nets are left to soak in tanks filled with microscopic algae spores. By winter, these seeds are embedded in the nets, which are then taken out and secured with buoys so they hang just below the surface of the ocean.

As the days lengthen, the *wakame* starts to sprout and grow rapidly; within a couple of months, the plants will have grown up to a meter long and be ready for cutting. The *wakame* harvest lasts from late January until sometime around the end of April, just before the plants grow too large and coarse to be of any value (*wakame* means "young sprouts"). From their boats, the harvesters use long, sharp sickles to prize the plants from their anchorage, piling their vessels high with the glistening seaweed. Back on shore, their families wait, ready to process the day's haul.

Wakame is never eaten raw, straight from the ocean; its fronds are too fragile to last more than a few hours after being gathered. Traditionally, it is sun-dried, a simple procedure that is sufficient to keep it for a year or so. First, however, the plants are rinsed and dipped briefly into boiling water—a process that transforms their mottled brown pigmentation into a beautiful, translucent, deep sea-green. Suddenly they look not only edible, but quite delectable.

Next, they are hung out to dry, usually clipped to drying lines with plastic clothes pegs. From a distance, the waving strands resemble freshly dried ribbons as they dangle in the morning sun. By midmorning, the entire haul will have been pegged out in the sunshine. The *wakame* strips start to darken and contract as they dry; by nightfall, they are crisp and rigid, rustling softly in the chill evening breeze.

Not all of the harvested *wakame* has to be dried; much is sold wet, packed in salt to keep it fresh. Formerly, this *nama-wakame* (生わかめ, "raw *wakame*") was a seasonal delicacy enjoyed only in spring. Now modern refrigeration and mass distribution make it available year round. And—as with fresh and dried pasta—the difference is remarkable; even after being reconstituted, dried *wakame* can never regain the soft texture and flavor of its fresh state.

In recent years, the new high-tech process of freeze-drying has brought *wakame* firmly into the age of convenience. Now, instead of minutes, it takes mere seconds to reconstitute the green fronds. Freeze-drying also means that the seaweed can be added to the dehydrated soup packets used for flavoring noodles—notably that dietary mainstay, instant ramen. And it is quite likely that, should Japan's manned space program ever get off the ground, freeze-dried *wakame* will be among the provisions taken into orbit by future astronauts.

Despite having infiltrated the ranks of junk food, *wakame* —low-calorie, fat-free, and a valuable source of essential trace minerals—is still recognized as a healthful and versatile ingredient. It appears in virtually all types of Japanese cuisine, from refined, multi-course banquets to noodles sold on the street. But the quintessential *wakame* recipe remains *wakame sunomono* (わかめ酢の物), a simple side dish that is served either alone or with seasonal and contrasting land vegetables, in a vinegar-based dressing known as *sanbaizu* (三杯酢). It is elegant, simple to prepare, and forms one of those distinctive counterpoints which add subtlety and depth to any meal. ❖

***Robbie Swinnerton** is a freelance writer based in Kamakura.*

Wakame-Kyūri Sunomono • わかめときゅうりの酢の物

"Wakame-Cucumber Salad"

(serves four)

Ingredients

(salad)

1/3 cup (1 oz.) ***nama-wakame*** (fresh *wakame* packed in salt) or **1 oz. dried** ***wakame***, reconstituted for 20–30 minutes in cold water

2 cucumbers, peeled and with seeds removed

1/2 tsp salt

(sanbaizu dressing)

1 cup ***yonezu*** (rice vinegar) or ***genmai-kurozu*** (brown rice vinegar)

1 cup ***dashi*** (cooking stock made from *katsuobushi* [dried bonito flakes] or *kombu* [kelp])

4 tbsp dark ***shōyu*** (Japanese soy sauce)

1 1/2 tbsp ***mirin*** (sweet cooking *sake*); if unavailable, use 1 1/2 tbsp brown sugar

Preparation

1. Mix dressing ingredients in a saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a near simmer, then turn off the heat and allow to cool. This dressing can be refrigerated and will keep indefinitely.

2. Reconstitute dried *wakame* by soaking in water for 20–30 minutes. Rinse thoroughly to remove any salt, sand, or other foreign bodies, and drain well. Cut off central spine and other hard bits, then chop into 1-inch lengths.

3. Slice cucumber into paper-thin slices. Sprinkle with a moderate amount of salt, knead gently, and place in a bowl.

4. Bring a small pan of water to a boil, and add the *wakame*. Allow the water to return to a boil, drain the *wakame*, and set aside to cool. Although this step is not essential, it helps to soften the *wakame* and gives it a strong green color.

5. Toss the *wakame* and sliced cucumbers together. Pour the *sanbaizu* dressing over the vegetables and toss again so that the salad is well coated.

6. Serve in small dishes at room temperature.

Alternative Preparations

- Other vegetables and fruits can be prepared this way to go with *wakame*, including young turnips, *daikon* radish (or red radish), watercress, and apple.

- The pulp of 1 orange or grapefruit (separated from all peel and inner membranes) can be added to the dressing.

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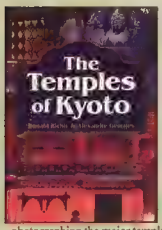
by Donald Richie & Alexandre Georges



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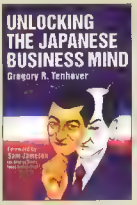

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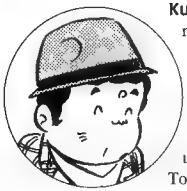

Kuruma Torajirō is an unmarried, middle-aged man who travels from town to town peddling books and other items at festivals. Tora-san is lovable but lazy, and his family anxiously wishes that he would settle down. "Home" is with his aunt and uncle in the Shibamata section of Tokyo.

Oi-chan, Tora-san's uncle, and **Oba-chan**, his aunt, together own Kurumaya, a shop selling the Japanese-style dumplings called *dango*. Since Tora-san's parents are dead, they serve as his surrogate parents.

Shachō-san runs the Asahi Print Shop and is a friend of the family. In this story, he is assisting in the search for a woman to marry the wayward Tora-san.

Sakura, his half-sister, is a sweet-tempered woman who worries about her brother. **Hiroshi**, her mild-mannered husband, works for the Asahi Print Shop.

The story so far . . .

Hoping to turn their black sheep into a family man, the Kurumas dispatch Shachō-san to the home of a local family, where he broaches the idea of a match between Tora-san and the family's daughter. Knowing Tora-san's reputation, Shachō-san tries to keep the name of the prospective groom a secret, but eventually he must 'fess up. "Do you take us for fools?!" shouts the father as his daughter bursts into tears. Shachō-san is kicked out of the house and returns to Kurumaya with the bad news. "There's no point," he notes, "continuing the search in Shibamata." The situation seems hopeless—until a neighborhood priest brings news of an appealing new prospect.

She's been married before, but she's a good catch, and—most important of all—she appears willing to accept Tora-san. Secretly, Tora-san can't wait to meet the beauty in the photo, but he sees no reason to make a big deal out of it, and his family's fussing on the day of the *o-miai* only angers him. "Instead of putting on appearances, let them see the real me," he snarls, and foiling everyone's intense efforts to keep him close at hand on this crucial day, he storms out the door for his morning walk.

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男純情の〜〜
くず
はじ
ん！
飯野理容店
BARBER
手焼せん
いらっしゃーい
ガラッ
ん？
見かけねぇ顔だな
新入りか？
ええ
おやじは？
ちょっと出てます
1
2
3
4
5
6
7

1 **Tora-san**: 男　　純情　　の～ . . .
(singing) *Otoko*　　*junjō*　　*nō*– . . .
man/male pure/simple heart of
"Oh, a man's pure heart is . . ."

Sign: くず餅
Kuzumochi
kudzu cake/confection
Kuzumochi

- *kuzu*, known in America as "kudzu," is a vine with starchy roots and stems. The starch is extracted and used as a thickener in cooking, and it's also mixed with water and steamed to make a confection known as *kuzumochi*, which is typically eaten with a sprinkling of soy flour and syrup.

2 **Tora-san**: ん!
N!
"Oh, yeah!" (PL2)

- *n* here would be pronounced with the rising intonation of a question and shows he has suddenly noticed or realized something.

3 **Signs**: 飯野　理容店　/　手焼　せん(べい)
Iino　*Riyōten*　/　*Teyaki*　*Senbei*
(name) barbershop / hand-roasted rice crackers
Iino Barbershop / Hand-Roasted *Senbei*

4 **Sound FX**: カラン
Karan
(sound of door opening)

Katchan: いらっしゃーい。
Irasshāi.
come
"Come right in, sir!" (PL3-4)

- *irasshai* (often elongated to *irasshāi*) is the abrupt command form of the PL4 verb *irassharu* ("come"). Shopkeepers use *irasshai* or the more polite *irasshaimase* to welcome customers as they enter their shops.

Tora-san: ん?
N?
huh?
"Huh?" (PL2)

5 **Tora-san**: 見かけねえ　顔　だ　な。
Mikakenē　*kao*　*da*　*na.*
unseen/unfamiliar face is (colloq.)
"It's a face I haven't seen before, isn't it?"
"I don't think I've seen you before." (PL2)

- *mikakenē* is a masculine slang version of *mikakenai*, negative of *mikakeru* ("see/catch sight of"). This modifies *kao* ("face"). In masculine slang and certain dialects, the vowel combination *ai* regularly changes to *ē*.
- *na* expresses a kind of self-check/confirmation and also implies that he assumes his listener will agree with what he has said.

6 **Tora-san**: 新入り　か?
Shin-iri　*ka?*
new member/employee (?)
"Are you new?" (PL2)

- *shin-iri* refers to a new member of a group—here the staff of the barbershop.

Katchan: ええ。
Ē.
"Yes." (PL3)

7 **Tora-san**: おやじ　は?
Oyaji　*wa?*
boss as for
"As for the boss?"
"Where's the boss?" (PL2)

Katchan: ちょっと　出てます。
Chotto　*detemasu.*
a little is out
"He stepped out for a moment." (PL3)

- *oyaji* is an informal word for "father," "master/boss," or for any middle-aged man; it can be merely familiar or it can be offensive, so it should be used with caution.
- stating just a topic with the intonation of a question (～ *wa?*) asks very generally about the status/condition/nature/location, etc., of that topic.
- *detemasu* is a contraction of *dete imasu*, the PL3 form of *dete iru* ("has gone out/is out"), from *deru* ("go/come out").

どうせパチンコだろう
1
ちょいと顔あたってくれや
はいただいま
2
もう一度訊くが…
本当に寅のような男でもいいんだね？
はい
3
暴力をふるうような人でなければ
うむ
4

1 **Tora-san**: どうせ パチンコ だろう。
Dōse pachinko darō.
anyway pinball is probably
"Pachinko, I bet." (PL2)

- *dōse* implies there is a predictability or inevitability about the conclusion that's being drawn.
- *pachinko* is the name of Japan's most popular arcade game, a kind of pinball. Players propel steel balls to the top of the machine and try to get them to drop into winning slots, which makes the machine discharge more balls. The object is to amass large quantities of balls to trade in for various prizes.
- *darō* makes a conjecture: "perhaps/probably/I suppose" → "I bet."

2 **Tora-san**: ちょいと 顔 あたってくれ や。
Choito kao atatte kure ya.
a little face shave-(request) (emph.)
"Gimme a shave, will ya?" (PL2)

Katchan: はい、ただいま。
Hai, tadaima.
yes right now
"Yes, sir. Right away." (PL3)

- *choito* is a variation of *chotto* ("a little").
- *atatte* is the *-te* form of *ataru*, which in the expression *kao (o) ataru* means "shave." *Kure* after the *-te* form of a verb makes an informal request or relatively gentle command.
- *ya* is used at the end of commands/suggestions/requests to emphasize the speaker's desire that the action be done.
- *hai* is used to express assent to or compliance with a request or command. Its tone can range from casual to quite formal.
- *tadaima* is more familiar to many as the greeting a person gives when arriving home, but the word's basic meaning is "just now/at this very moment," so it can be used in a wide variety of situations for referring to actions that either have just occurred or will occur immediately. It has a relatively formal feeling in these latter uses.

3 **Priest**: もう 一度 訊く が、/ 本当に 寅 のような 男 でも いい んだ ね?
Mō ichido kiku ga, / hontō ni Tora no yō na otoko demo ii n da ne?
more one time ask but truly (name) like man even if it is is good/OK (explan.) (colloq.)
"I'll ask you one more time, but you really think it's OK even if it's a man like Tora?"
"I'll ask you this just one more time. You're really willing to accept a man like Tora?" (PL2)

Woman: はい。
Hai.
"Yes." (PL2)

- *mō* before a number means "[that many] more," *ichi* = "one," and *-do* is the counter suffix for "times/occasions/repetitions," so *mō ichido* = "one more time."
- *kiku*, more typically written 聞く, can mean either "listen to/hear" or "ask/inquire"; the kanji 訊 can be used for the latter meanings only.
- *hontō* = "true/truth," and adding *ni* makes it "truly/really."
- *no yō na* after a noun essentially corresponds to "~-like" in English, and *otoko* = "man," so *Tora no yō na otoko* = "a Tora-like man" → "a man like Tora."
- ~ *demo ii* = "even ~ is fine/OK" or "even ~ is acceptable."
- the explanatory *n da* here is mostly for emphasis.
- *ne* seeks confirmation or agreement from the listener.

4 **Woman**: 暴力 を ふるう ような 人 でなければ。
Bōryoku o furuu yō na hito de nakereba.
violence (obj.) exercise type of person if [he] is not
"If he is not the kind of person who exercises violence."
"So long as he's not a violent man." (PL2)

Priest: うむ。
Umu.
uh-huh/I see
"I see." (PL2)

- *yō na* ("type/kind of") makes the complete thought/sentence *bōryoku o furuu* ("[he] exercises violence") into a modifier for *hito* ("person"), implying "a person of the kind who ~."
- *de nakereba* is a conditional "if" form of *de nai* ("is not"), negative of *da/desu* ("is/are"). "If he is not ~" in this case implies "so long as he is not ~."

いらっしゃーい
1
よっちゃん聞いたか
2
何をです？
3
あそうかおめぇはまだ知らねぇか
寅のこと！
寅……
4
あフーテンの寅ですか
5
6
おやじさんから聞いたことありますよ
どうしようもないダメな人なんでしょその人？
まあな
7

1 **Katchan**: いらっしゃーい。
Irasshāi.
come
"Come right in, sir!" (PL4)

2 **Customer**: よ、 勝っちゃん、 聞いた か?
Yo, Katchan, kiita ka?
(greeting) (name-dim.) heard (?)
"Yo, Katchan, did you hear?" (PL2)

- *yo* is an informal, masculine greeting like "hi!/hey!/yo!"
- *-chan* is a diminutive equivalent of *-san* ("Mr./Ms."), used most commonly with the names of children, but also used among adults who are on familiar terms. It's often added to just the first one or two syllables of the person's given name, so anyone whose given name begins with 勝 (*katsu*) can be called *Katchan*.

3 **Katchan**: 何 を です?
Nani o desu?
what (obj.) is/are
"About what?" (PL3)

4 **Customer**: あ、 そう か。 おめぇ は まだ 知らねぇ か、 寅 のこと!
A, sō ka. Omē wa mada shiranē ka, Tora no koto!
(interj.) that way (?) you as for yet not know (?) (name) about
"Oh, right. You don't know yet, do you?—about Tora." (PL2)

Katchan: 寅 . . .
Tora . . .
(name)
"Tora . . ."

- *sō ka* is literally a question ("Is it so?/Is that right?"), but it's also used as an interjection expressing sudden realization or understanding ("Oh, that's right/Oh, I know").
- *omē* = *omae*, which is a rough, masculine word for "you." The *ae* vowel combination often becomes *ē* in masculine slang.
- *mada* combines with a negative later in the sentence to mean "not yet."
- *shiranē* = *shiranai* ("not know").
- ～ *no koto* is literally "things of/about ～" → "about ～."

5 **Katchan**: あ、 フーテン の 寅 です か?
A, Fūten no Tora desu ka?
(interj.) drifter/bum who is (name) is (?)
"Oh, do you mean 'Shiftless Tora'?" (PL3)

- *fūten* can refer either to a "mad/deranged person" or to a "drifter/slacker/social dropout"—here the latter. Tora-san has been nicknamed *Fūten no Tora* ("Shiftless Tora") because of his wandering lifestyle.

6 **FX**: ピクッ
Piku!
Twitch (effect of pricking up his ears)

7 **Katchan**: おやじさん から 聞いた こと ありま す よ。
Oyaji-san kara kiita koto arimasu yo.
boss-(hon.) from heard thing/experience have (emph.)
"I've heard about him from the boss."
"The boss has mentioned him." (PL3)

Sound FX: シュッ
Shu!
Swish (effect of sharpening blade on razor strop)

Katchan: どうしようもない ダメな 人 なん でしょ、その 人?
Dō shiyō mo nai dame na hito na n desho, sono hito?
hopeless no good person (explan.) right? that person
"He's a hopeless ne'er-do-well, right?—that person."
"He's a hopeless screw-up, right?—this Tora." (PL3)

Customer: まあ な。
Mā na.
(interj.) (colloq.)
"Yeah, you could say that." (PL2)

- *kiita* is the plain/abrupt past form of *kiku* ("hear/listen to").
- ～ *koto (ga) arimasu* is the PL3 form of ～ *koto ga aru*, which after a past verb means "have had the experience of [doing the action]" or "once [did the action]."
- *dō shiyō mo nai*, literally "there is no way to do anything about [it/him/them]," is an expression for "hopeless [person/thing/situation]." This expression and *dame na* ("is no good") both modify *hito* ("person").
- *na n* is a contraction of *na no*, the form explanatory *no* takes after nouns.
- *desho* (or *deshō*) makes a conjecture, "surely/probably," but when spoken with the intonation of a question it's like a tag question: "right?/isn't that so?"
- *mā na* (or *mā ne*) vaguely affirms what another person has said: "Yeah, sort of/Well, yes, I suppose/Yeah, something like that."

そらもう
柴又の
鼻つまみ
もんよ
そんな
ヒドイ人
なんですか
1
その寅がよ
見合いを
するんだとよ
笑っちゃうよな
ぎひひひっ
2
寅ってぇのは
下駄みてぇな
面してんだ
よくまぁ
そんな奴が
その気に
なると思って
よぉ
3
相手って
のは？
4
知らねぇ
けど
よっぽどの
物好きだぜ
とんでも
なく
ブスだったり
して
5

1 **Customer**: そら　もう、　柴又　の　鼻つまみもん　よ。
Sora　mō,　Shibamata　no　hanatsumami-mon　yo.
as for that (emph.)　(place)　of　nose-pinching person (is-emph.)
"I mean, he's Shibamata's black sheep." (PL2)

Katchan: そんな　ヒドイ　人　なんですか?
Sonna　hidoi　hito　na n desu ka?
that much　terrible　person　(explan.-?)
"He's that bad?" (PL3)

FX: ヒクヒク
Hiku hiku
(effect of shaking with growing fury)

- *sora* is a contraction of *sore wa* ("as for that"), and *mō* (lit., "now/already") is here being used as an interjection that adds emphasis. *Sore wa mō* often begins a statement of strong agreement.
- *tsumami* is a noun form of *tsumamu* ("pinch"), and *mon* is a contraction of *mono* (者, "person"). *Hana o tsumamu* means "hold one's nose," and *hanatsumami-mono* refers to a person who is disliked and treated as an outcast by a particular group.
- *sonna* here is a colloquial equivalent of *sonna-ni* ("that much").

2 **Customer**: その 寅　が　よ、見合い を　する　んだ　と　よ。笑っちゃう　よ　な。ぎひひひっ。
Sono Tora　ga　yo,　miai　o　suru　n da　to　yo.　Waratchau　yo　na.　Gi hi hi hi!
that (name) (subj.) (emph.) *miai* (obj.) do (explan.) (quote) (emph.) laugh-(spont.) (emph.) (colloq.) (laugh)
"They say Tora is having a *miai*. It cracks me up! Tee hee hee." (PL2)

- *sono Tora* (lit., "that Tora") implies something like "the Tora whom I have described in that way."
- the emphatic particle *yo* can be inserted in the middle of a sentence as a kind of verbal pause.
- *miai* (often *o-miai*, with the honorific prefix *o-*) refers to a formal meeting between the prospective bride and groom in an arranged marriage. *Miai o suru* = "do/have a *miai*."
- the quotative *to* without a specific speaker mentioned is like "they say ～."
- *waratchau* is a colloquial contraction of *waratte shimau*, the *-te* form of *warau* ("laugh") plus *shimau* ("end/finish/put away"), which in this case implies the action is involuntary or occurs spontaneously → "it makes me laugh/cracks me up."

3 **Customer**: 寅　ってぇ　の　は 下駄みてえな　面　してん　だ。
Tora　ttē　no　wa　geta mitē na　tsura　shiten　da.
(name) (quote) one as for clog-like face/mug has (explan.)
"Tora has a mug like a wooden clog." (PL2)

Customer: よく まぁ　そんな　奴　が　その　気　に　なる　と　思って よぉ。
Yoku　mā　sonna　yatsu　ga　sono　ki　ni　naru　to　omotte　yō.
well (interj.) that kind of guy (subj.) of that desire to becomes (quote) thought (emph.)
"It amazes me that that kind of guy gets the desire to marry."
"I can't believe a guy like that would even think of getting married." (PL2)

- *ttē no wa* here and *tte no wa* in the next panel are colloquial equivalents of *to iu no wa*, literally, "as for the one called ～," but often serving as just a fancy *wa* ("as for ～").
- *mitē na* = *mitai na*, and *tsura* is an informal/slang word for "face." X *mitai na* Y means "Y that is like X," so *geta mitai na tsura* = "face that is like a *geta*" (i.e., square-shaped).
- *shiten da* is a contraction of *shite iru no da*, from the verb *suru* and explanatory *no da*. ～ *kao/tsura (o) suru* means "make a ～ face/look ～." In the *shite iru* form it can refer not only to a passing expression but to a person's congenital facial features.
- *yoku mā* expresses surprise/amazement at another person's behavior.
- *yatsu* is an informal/slang word for "guy/fellow."
- *ki* means "will/intent/desire," so *sono ki* is literally "desire/wish for that." ～ *ki ni naru* is an idiomatic expression meaning "get the desire to [do the action described or referred to]."
- *omotte* is the *-te* form of *omou* ("think"); the *-te* form usually means the speaker will go on to say more, but here his implication is clear.

4 **Katchan**: 相手　って　の　は?
Aite　tte　no　wa?
counterpart (quote) one as for
"Who's the prospective bride?" (PL2)

- *aite* basically means "counterpart" and can be used to refer to persons ranging from a "companion/mate/partner" to a "rival/opponent/enemy."

5 **Customer**: 知らねぇ けど、よっぽどの　物好き　だ　ぜ。
Shiranē　kedo,　yoppodo no　monozuki　da　ze.
not know　but　considerable　eccentric　is　(emph.)
"I don't know, but she must be a real nut." (PL2)

Sound FX: シャカシャカ
Shaka shaka
(sound of whipping up shaving cream)

Katchan: とんでもなく　ブス　だったりして。
Tondemonaku　busu　dattari shite.
outrageously　ugly　was-or something
"Maybe she's incredibly ugly, or something."
"Maybe she's ugly as mud." (PL2)

(continued on next page)

それだよ
下駄に
お似合いなら
わらじ
みてぇな
女なんじゃ
ねぇか
いひひ
1
ひよいっ
2
げ
下駄
みたいな
……!!
3
ヘェーッ!!
4
ムカ
わっ
5

5 *(continued from previous page)*

- *shiranē = shiranai* ("not know").
- *yoppodo* is a colloquial equivalent of *yohodo* ("greatly/considerably"). *Yoppodo no* = "considerable."
- *monozuki* refers to a high or excessive level of curiosity—or to the person who has that curiosity. It's often used to describe people who do offbeat things or are eccentric in the choices they make.
- *ze* is a rough, masculine particle for emphasis.
- *tondemonaku* ("outrageously/incredibly") is a form of *tondemonai* ("preposterous/outrageous/astounding").
- *busu* is a slang word for "ugly woman."
- *dattari shite* is the *-te* form of *dattari suru* ("is something like"), the *-tari suru* form ("do a thing/things like ～") for *da/desu* ("is/are").

---

1 **Customer**: それ だ よ。 下駄 に お似合い なら、わらじみてぇな 女 なん じゃねぇか? いひひっ。
Sore da yo. Geta ni o-niai nara, waraji mitē na onna na n ja nē ka? I hi hi!
that is (emph.) clogs for/with (hon.)-matching if is straw sandal-like woman (explan.) isn't it? (laugh)
"That's it! If she's a match for a clog, she's probably got a face like a straw sandal. Hee hee hee." (PL2)

- *niai* is a noun form of *niau* ("becomes/befits/matches well"). The honorific *o-* is usually added regardless of the politeness level.
- *nara* after a noun is a conditional "if [it/he/she] is."
- *na n ja nē ka = na no de wa nai ka*, which is like "is it not the case that ～?" The question is mostly rhetorical and has the effect of making a conjecture: "she's probably ～."

2 **FX**: ひよいっ
Hyoi!
(effect of light, nimble action—here, removing the towel from Tora-san's face)

3 **Sound FX**: ハッ
Ha!
(effect of catching breath in sudden realization/panic)

Katchan: げ、 下駄みたいな . . . !!
Ge- geta mitai na . . . !
(stammer) clog-like
"L-like a clog . . . !" (PL2)

4 **Sound FX**: バッ
Bā!
(effect of sudden, vigorous action—here, ripping the sheet off as he stands up)

Both: ヒェーッ!
Hiē!
(exclam.)
"Yikes!"

5 **FX**: ムンズ
Munzu
(effect of taking firm hold of Katchan's arm)

Katchan: わっ!
Wa!
(exclam.)
"Ack!"

ぷはっ
1
てめぇら
よくも
よくもっ
2
遅いなぁ
寅は
何やっと
るんだ
……
3
4
ファンファンファン
5

1 **Sound FX**: ピシャピシャ
Pisha pisha
(effect of slathering shaving cream on customer's face)

Customer: ぶはっ
Puha!
(effect of gasping for breath)

2 **Tora-san**: てめぇら、よく も、 よく もっ。
Temē-ra, yoku mo, yoku mo!
you-(plural) well (emph.) well (emph.)
"You bastards. How dare you . . . how dare you . . . !" (PL1)

FX: ギラッ
Gira!
(glint of shiny blade)

- *temē* is from *temae*, which can mean "I/we," "you," or "oneself." Here it means "you," with the suffix *-ra* making it plural. Although the slurred *temē* can be used good-naturedly in other situations, in fights it sounds very rough—something like "you" plus an insulting epithet in English.
- *yoku mo* comes at the beginning of sentences showing incredulity or anger, like "how can it be that ～?" or "how dare ～?" *Yoku* is the adverb form of the adjective *ii/yoi* ("good/fine/OK").

3 **Priest**: 遅い なあ、 寅 は。 / 何 やっとるんだ?
Osoi nā, Tora wa. / Nani yattoru n da?
is late (emph.) (name) as for / what is doing
"Tora sure is late. What could he be doing?" (PL2)

- *nā* adds colloquial emphasis, like "it sure is/does ～."
- placing *Tora wa* at the end is inverted syntax; normal order would be *Tora wa osoi nā.*
- *yattoru* = *yatte iru* ("is doing"), from *yaru*, an informal word for "do."
- asking a question with the explanatory *n da* is masculine, and often sounds quite rough.

4 **Sound FX**: ギャーッ
Gya!
Aaaaaack! (sound of scream)

5 **Sound FX**: ファン ファン ファン
Fan fan fan
(sound of patrol car siren)

と
寅の
兄貴が!!
2
1
このやろーっ
BAR BAR
3
ヒ～～～ッ
助けてっ
ポカポカ
このこのっ
やめなさいっ
4

1 **Sound FX**: ファン ファン
Fan fan
(sound of patrol car siren)

2 **Genkō**: と、 寅 の 兄貴 が!!
To- Tora no aniki ga!!
(stammer) (name) (=) older brother (subj.)
"Big brother Tora is . . . !"
"Tora's gone berserk!" (PL2)

Sound FX: ファン
Fan
(siren)

- *aniki* is a slang term for "older brother," but it's also used by neighborhood rowdies, gangsters, etc., to refer to their "elders/seniors" in the group. Genkō is an old friend of Tora's who looks up to him like an older brother.
- *no* marks *Tora* and *aniki* as referring to the same thing → "Big brother Tora."

3 **Tora-san**: この やろーっ!
Kono yarō!
this guy
"You S.O.B.!" (PL1)

- *yarō* is an informal/slang word for "guy/fellow," so *kono yarō* looks benign enough in its literal meaning of "this guy/fellow," but it is in fact an insult: "you rascal/jerk/twit" (or worse, depending on the context and tone).

4 **Katchan**: ヒ〜ッ、助けてっ。
Hii–, tasukete!
(exclam.) help
"Yikes! Help!" (PL2)

Sound FX: ポカッ ポカッ
Poka! poka!
(sound of punching Katchan in the head)

Tora-san: この、このっ!
Kono, kono!
this this
"You . . . you . . . !" (PL1)

Policeman: やめなさいっ!
Yamenasai!
stop it-(command)
"Stop that!" (PL3)

- *tasukete* is the *-te* form of *tasukeru* ("help/rescue/save"); the *-te* form of this word is often used as a cry for help.
- *kono* is literally "this," but in idiomatic use it often refers to the listener ("you"), especially when the speaker is berating or insulting him.
- *yamenasai* is a relatively gentle command form of *yameru* ("stop/quit").

やめんか
こらっ
1
神明會
2
……

1 **Policeman**: やめん か、こらっ!
Yamen ka, kora!
not quit (?) (interj.)
"Won't you quit? None of that!"
"Stop it, I say!" (PL2)

- *yamen* is a contraction of *yamenai*, negative of *yameru* ("quit/stop"), and *ka* makes it a question, so *yamen ka* is literally "won't you quit?" But the question is purely rhetorical and in fact makes a strong command: "Stop it!"
- *kora!* is an interjection for scolding, like "None of that!/Cut it out!" At the beginning of a sentence it can be like a sharp "Hey!" to get the offender's attention and make him freeze; at the end, it's often like an "I say" added for emphasis.

2 **Sign**: 神明会
Shinmei-kai
(name)-association
Shinmei Association

Sound FX: チッチッ
Chi! Chi!
Chirp Chirp (chirping of birds)

- *Shinmei-kai* is the name of the merchant's association in the town where Tora-san's family lives.

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1

Sound FX: Ring ring
リーン、リーン
Riin, riin
(sound of telephone ringing)

- ring は、ベルがなるという意味の動詞、ベルの音の意味の名詞として使われるが、このように擬声語としても用いられる。また I'll ring you up/give me a ring など、「電話する（動詞）／電話（名詞）」という意味でも使用される。

2

Calvin: "Hello?"
もしもし?
Moshi-moshi?
hello

Voice: "May I speak with your father, please?"
お父さんと　話　を させてもらえますか。
Otōsan to hanashi o sasete moraemasu ka?
father with speak (obj.) be allowed to (?)

- May I ～ は許可を求める時の表現。電話での May I speak with ～, please? は、話したい相手を呼び出すときの常用表現で「～さんいらっしゃいますか／～さんお願いできますか」と訳すのが自然だが、ここでは次のカルヴィンの対応に合わせて上記のように訳したもの。

3

Calvin: "Heck, you don't need MY permission! Be my guest!"
ヘン! ボクの 許可 なんか いらない だろ! 勝手にしたら いい じゃないか!
Hen! Boku no kyoka nanka iranai daro! Katte ni shitara ii ja nai ka!
(interj.) my permission as for don't need surely freely if do good is it not?

- Heck は、軽い嫌悪感などを表わす間投詞で「フン、チェッ」など。
- Be my guest は、口語表現で「ご自由にどうぞ／どうぞご勝手に」など。しばしば皮肉っぽく用いられる。
- カルヴィンは慣用表現としての May I speak . . . ? を文字通り許可を求めていると解釈したもの。

4

Calvin: "What a weirdo."
なんて おかしな ヤツ だろ。
Nante okashi na yatsu daro.
(exclam.) strange person (emph.)

Sound FX: Ring ring
リーン、リーン
Riin, riin
(sound of telephone ringing)

- Weirdo は形容詞 weird「風変わりな／奇妙な」を名詞化したもので、weird person の意味の口語表現。「変わった人／奇妙な人」の意味に使われる。

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1

Jon: Yawn
フワ～
Fuwā
(sound of yawn)

- Yawn「あくび」および「あくびをする」という意味で名詞と動詞の両方に使用されるが、ここでは擬声語として使用しているもの。

2

Jon: "I'm struggling to stay awake."
何とかして 眠らない ように してる んだ。
Nantoka shite nemuranai yō ni shiteru n da.
doing somehow not sleep such that do (explan.)

- I'm = I am.
- stay awake「起きている」→「眠らない」。
- struggle to 「～しようと一生懸命努力する／奮闘する」。

3

Garfield: "Why would anybody do that?"
どうして そんな ことする んだ?
Dō shite sonna koto suru n da?
why that kind of thing do (explan.)

- Why would he do that? と異なり、Why would anybody do that? には、「そんなことをする人がいるのは驚きだ／そんなことをするとはまったく不可解だ」などの意味が含まれる。

来れ！翻訳者
横浜へ

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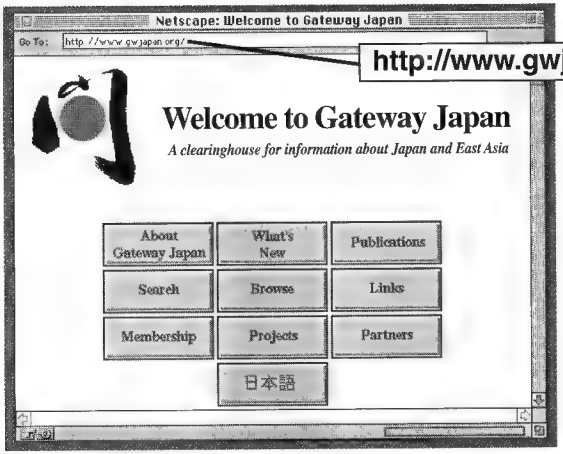

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Lesson 54 • *Genki*: Health in body and soul

Genki is one of those words you see early on in your study of Japanese, usually in something like the following:

A: *O-genki desu ka?* ("How are you?")
B: *Ē, okage-sama de.* ("Fine, thank you.")

On the surface, that seems pretty straightforward, but what does *genki* actually mean? The literal meaning of the greeting above comes closer to "Are you well?" than "How are you?" This suggests a relation to "good health/well-being," but the kanji, 元 (*gen*, "origin/source") and 気 (*ki*, "energy/spirit"), give a fundamental meaning that is more like "vital energy." While the connection between "health" and "vital energy" is not that much of a stretch, it may take a little more imagination to see how "put forth vital energy" (*genki o dasu*) becomes "cheer up."

Ambiguity breeds flexibility, making it possible to use *genki* in a variety of situations—it's just a matter of getting to know the possibilities.

Kenkyusha's J-E dictionary gives four groups of meanings for *genki*:

[energy] • energy, vigor, vitality, dash
[spirit] • spirit, pep
[health] • health, stamina, vim
[courage] • mettle, nerve, pluck, moral stamina

We illustrate a few of the more common usages below.

How've you been?

These two friends ran into each other on the street. The one on the left has some exciting news.

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A: ひさしぶりー！ 元気?
Hisashiburii! *Genki?*
first time in long time well/healthy
"It's been a long time. Are you well?"
"It's been so long! How've you been?" (PL2)

B: うんっ！
Un!
yes
"Yeah!"
"Great!" (PL2)

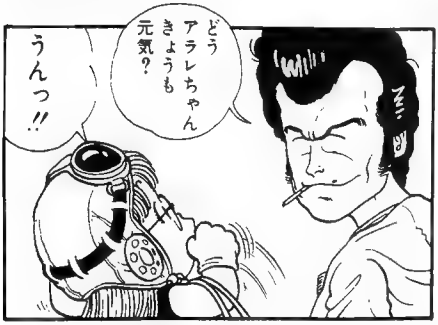
B: 聞いて よ、 聞いて よ！ 今日 ねー...
Kiite yo, Kiite yo! *Kyō nē...*
listen-(request) (emph.) listen-(request) (emph.) today (colloq.)
"Guess what! Guess what! Today..." (PL2)

- *hisashiburi* is short for *hisashiburi desu (ne)* (lit., "It's been a long time, [hasn't it?]"), a standard greeting used when meeting someone you haven't seen in a long time.
- *kiite*, from *kiku* ("hear/listen [to]"), is short for *kiite kudasai* ("please listen"). Using the *-te* form as a request without *kudasai* is very casual. The emphasizer *yo* adds a feeling of excitement: "listen!" ▸ "guess what!"

As an informal greeting, *genki?* can be translated in a variety of ways: "How are you?" "How's it going?" "Are you doing OK?" "What's up?" or just a simple "Hello." But since the literal meaning is "Are you well?", the proper response is "yes" or "no." Also, it can't be used in first-time meetings the way "How are you?" or "Hello" can in English.

Doing OK?

Arale has stopped by her friend's house on her way to school to pick him up. She sees his father first and says hello.



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Father: どう、アラレちゃん、きょうも 元気?
Dō, Arare-chan? Kyō mo genki?
how (name-dim.) today also doing well
"How's it going? You doing OK today, as usual?" (PL2)

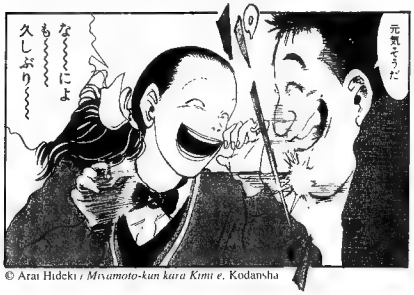
Arale: うんっ!!
Un!!
yes
"You bet!" (PL2)

- *dō* ("how/in what manner?") here is short for *dō da* or *dō desu ka*, "How is it?/How are you?/How's it going?"
- *kyō* = "today," and *kyō mo* = "today too" ‣ "as usual."
- although her name, アラレ, would normally be romanized as *Arare*, the author of this manga prefers the spelling "Arale."

Genki? and its more formal equivalent *o-genki desu ka?* are most typically used to greet people you haven't seen in a while, as in our first example, but if you add a phrase like *kyō mo*, it can work even with people you see daily, as shown here.

You're looking good!

Jinbo is a salesman for a bookstore supply company. This clerk treats everyone like dirt but has a soft spot for Jinbo. Unaware of his presence, she was just berating a young salesman whom Jinbo is training. She quickly changes her tune when she sees him.



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Jinbo: 元気 そう だ。
Genki sō da.
healthy/well looks like is
"You look well."
"You're looking good!" (PL2)

Sound FX: パーン
Pan!
(sound of hitting chin)

Clerk: なーに よ、もー、 久しぶりー!
Nāni yo! Mō, hisashiburii!
what (emph.) (interj.) first time in long time
"Wha-a-t?! He-e-y! It's been so long!"
"What're you doing here?! Gosh! It's been a long time!" (PL2)

- *sō da/desu* following a descriptive noun means "appears/looks like ~."
- *nani* ("what") here implies "What're you doing here?!/What are you talking about?!/Stop kidding!/Come on, don't give me that!"

Farewell

The man on the left is retiring, and this is his last day at work.

© Akizuki Risu / *OL Shinkaron*, Kodansha

A: 今日 で 定年 です ね。
Kyō de teinen desu ne.
today as of retirement is (colloq.)
"So today is the day you retire." (PL3)

A: お疲れさまでした。 どうぞ お元気で。
Otsukare-sama deshita. Dōzo o-genki de
job well done (emph.) (hon.)-in good health
"You've done a fine job. Best wishes for good health."
"Congratulations. Take care of yourself." (PL3-4)

B: ...うん
... Un
yes
"Thanks." (PL2)

- *teinen* means "retirement age" or simply "retirement." Though 55 was long the standard retirement age in Japan, most companies raised it to 60 during the 1980s
- *otsukare-sama deshita* (from the verb *tsukareru*, "become tired") is a standard phrase used to acknowledge that someone has worked hard. "Nice going/Good job/Thanks for your hard work/Congratulations."

O-genki de is used in farewells to wish the listener continued good health. Sometimes it can serve as "goodbye" by itself

Healthy

This woman just saw a shooting star. She is trying to make a wish as quickly as possible for all the things that will bring her happiness.

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Woman: すてきな 恋人... 美人 になる...
Suteki na koibito ... bijin ni naru ...
wonderful lover beautiful woman become
元気 で 長生き...
genki de nagaiki ...
good health in long life
"A wonderful boyfriend . . . to become beautiful . . . to live a long, healthy life . . ." (PL2)

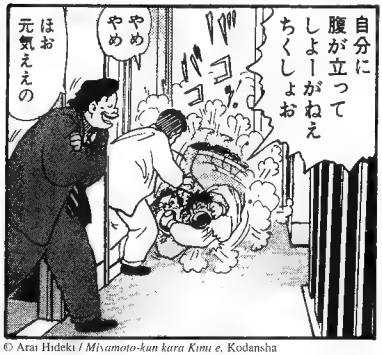
Woman: えーと / えーと
E to / E to
let's see let's see
"What else . . . what else . . ." (PL2)

Woman: でも、それ だけ で ホントに 幸せ?
Demo, sore dake de honto ni shiawase?
but that only with truly happy
"But will that be enough to make me truly happy?" (PL2)

- *nagaiki* is a noun which means "long life." The verb form is *nagaiki suru* ("live long").
- *ē to* is a pause/hesitation phrase, like the English "uhh/well/let's see/hmm."

Energetic

Hiroshi has just been dumped by a woman he met at a train station and dated only a few times. When his supervisor, Yajima, tries to snap him out of his depression with a good-natured head-dunk in the bathroom sink, his emotions get the better of him and he tackles Yajima, much to the amusement of their coworkers.



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Hiroshi: 自分 に 腹が立って しょーがねえ。 ちくしょお
Jibun ni hara ga tatte shō ga nē. Chikushō.
self at get angry-and nothing can be done darn/rats
"I'm so mad at myself I don't know what to do, damn it!" (PL2)

Sound FX: バコッ バコ
Bako! Bako!
(effect of hitting each other)

Coworker 1: やめ、 やめ。
Yame, yame.
stop stop
"All right, cut it out." (PL2)

Coworker 2: ほう、 元気 ええ の。
Hō, genki ē no.
(exclam.) energy good (emph.)
"Oh boy! They sure have a lot of energy!" (PL2)

- *hara ga tatte* is the *-te* form of *hara ga tatsu*, an expression for "get angry," and *shō ga nē* is a contraction of *shiyō ga nai* (equivalent to *shikata ga nai*), meaning "there is no means/nothing one can do." After the *-te* form of words describing emotions, *shiyō ga nai* implies the emotion is very intense—essentially like "I feel so ~, I don't know what to do."
- *chikushō* (lit., "beast") is a strong, but not vulgar, expletive of chagrin: "Rats!/Darn!"
- *genki ē* is dialect for *genki ga ii* (lit., "energy is good"), which implies "full of energy/energetic."

Energetically

Arale and a friend are on their way to school, but the friend's mother doesn't approve of their mode of transportation.

© Toriyama Akira / *Dr. Slump*, Shueisha

Mother: こらーっ! ガキ は 元気よく あるいていけっ!!
Korā! Gaki wa genki yoku aruite ike!
(exclam.) kids as for energetically walk-(command)
"Hey! You kids get off your behinds and walk!" (PL2)

Friend: チェ...
Che...
(interj.)
"Phooey!" (PL2)

- *kora* is an abrupt word used to admonish or caution: "Hey!/Stop that!"
- *gaki* is used to refer to youngsters, usually in a derogatory way ("brat/delinquent"), but it can also simply be translated as "kid."
- *genki yoku* is the adverb form of *genki (ga) ii* ("energetic") → "energetically." The implication here is not that they should walk in a particularly energetic manner, but that since they are kids, they ought to have plenty of energy to go by foot.

Determined/positive attitude

This cat and dog are watching their penguin friend walk off to kindergarten even though he has a cold and it is an unbearably hot day. They are impressed with his positive attitude.

© Gyūnyū Jimusho / *Take'emon-ke no Hitobito*, Futabasha

Cat: おっ、 元気な ヤツ だ なー。
O! *Genki na* *yatsu* *da* *nā.*
(exclam.) strong-willed person/guy is (colloq.)
"Wow! He sure is determined/unstoppable."
"Wow! Where does he get the energy?" (PL2)

Dog: あぢー
Ajii
hot
"Boy it's hot!" (PL2)

FX: テッテッテッ
Te! Te! Te!
(effect of quickly walking away)

- *yatsu* is an informal/slang word for "guy/fellow/person."
- *ajii* is slang for *atsui* ("hot").

Genki da nā/nē is typically used when you are impressed by someone else's high energy or spirits, but it can also be used like this when a person shows never-say-die determination in spite of being in difficult circumstances.

Cheerful

The woman in the bottom panel was depressed but her boyfriend just said something funny.

© Saimon Fumi / *Onna Tomodachi*, Futabasha

FX: ニコ ニコ
(boyfriend) *Niko niko*
(effect of smiling)

Woman: 一緒に いる だけ で…
(thinking) *Issho ni* *iru* *dake* *de . . .*
together be only with/by

Woman: 元気 が わいてきちゃう。
(thinking) *genki* *ga* *waite kichau.*
energy/cheer (subj.) bubbles up
Just by being with him, I fill up with energy.
Just being with him cheers me up. (PL2)

Woman. んふふっ
nfufu!
(muffled laugh)

- *waite kitchau* is short for *waite kite shimau*, the *-te* form of *waku* ("boil/bubble up") plus the *-te shimau* form of *kuru* ("come"). *-Te shimau* often implies the action occurs spontaneously.

Look/seem down

When Yoshimura shows up at the office, Haibara notices that he doesn't look too well.

© Aoki Yuji/ *Nanīwa Kin'yūdō*, Kodansha

Haibara: 吉村さん、 元気 ない ですね。
Yoshimura-san, genki nai desu ne.
(name)-hon. energy doesn't exist (colloq.)
献金急便 へ の 融資 が 失敗した から ですか
Kenkin Kyūbin e no yūshi ga shippai shita kara desu ka.
(co. name) to/for of financing (subj.) failed because is it?
"Mr. Yoshimura, you're looking kind of down today. Is it because the financing for Kenkin Courier Service fell through?" (PL3)

- *kenkin* means "gift of money/contribution," and *kyūbin* is an element in the names of more than one "home delivery/courier" service. The name Kenkin Kyūbin is a take-off on Sagawa Kyūbin, a courier service whose political contributions led to a major corruption scandal and the resignation of a number of high-placed politicians in the early '90s.
- *no* makes the phrase *kenkin kyūbin e* ("to Kenkin Kyubin") into a modifier for *yūshi* ("financing") → "financing that is to/for Kenkin Kyūbin."
- *shippai shita* is the plain/abrupt past form of *shippai suru* ("fail").

Cheer up!

Toro has just been bawled out by his supervisor for not bringing in enough new sales. One of the secretaries tries to cheer him up.

© Fujiko Fujio A / *Yumu*, Shogakukan

Secretary: 登呂さん、元気 だして。
Toro-san, genki dashite.
(name) energy produce
"Mr. Toro, cheer up." (PL3)

Toro: えっ?
E!?
"What?" (PL2)

- *dashite* is the *-te* form of *dasu*, "bring out/show/produce." The *-te* form of a verb can serve as a gentle command or request.

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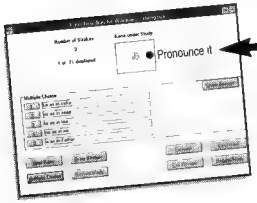

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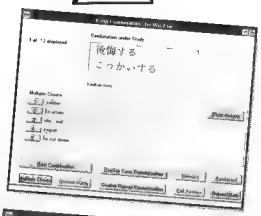

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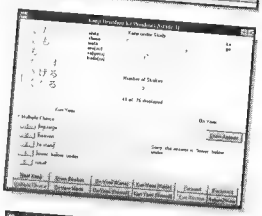

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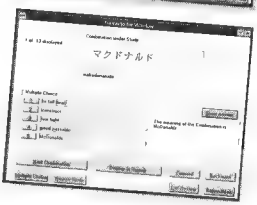

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vocabulary summary

From *Kasai no Hito*, p. 25

見る	*miru*	see/look at
シダ	*shida*	fern
お正月	*o-shōgatsu*	New Year's
夏	*natsu*	summer (*n.*)
葉	*ha*	leaf
裏	*ura*	back/behind
ツブツブの	*tsubutsubu no*	bumpy
胞子	*hōshi*	spore
種子	*tane*	seed (*n.*)
落ちる	*ochiru*	fall/drop (*v.*)
風	*kaze*	wind (*n.*)
運ぶ	*hakobu*	carry/transport
前葉体	*zen'yōtai*	prothallium
卵	*tamago*	egg (*n.*)
精子	*seishi*	sperm/antherozoid
普通の	*futsū no*	ordinary/normal
草	*kusa*	grass/herb
持つ	*motsu*	hold/have
育つ	*sodatsu*	grow/mature
飛ぶ	*tobu*	fly (*v.*)
自分で	*jibun de*	by oneself
探す	*sagasu*	look/search (for)
奇妙な	*kimyō na*	strange/curious
背広	*sebiro*	suit (of clothes)
ごく	*goku*	very/extremely
勤め人	*tsutomenin*	working person
見える	*mieru*	appear/look
熱心に	*nesshin ni*	fervently
話し込む	*hanashikomu*	talk intensely
教育する	*kyōiku suru*	educate
どうやら	*dōyara*	apparently
本人	*honnin*	the person him/herself
感じ入る	*kanji-iru*	be moved/impressed
様子	*yōsu*	appearance
気分	*kibun*	mood
巻き込む	*makikomu*	entangle/draw in
無邪気	*mujaki*	innocence
印象	*inshō*	impression
写真	*shashin*	photograph (*n.*)
引っ越す	*hikkosu*	move/relocate (residence)
町	*machi*	town
咲く	*saku*	blossom/bloom (*v.*)
谷	*tani*	valley
黄色い	*kiiroi*	yellow (*adj.*)
続く	*tsuzuku*	continue/go on
案内する	*annai suru*	guide/lead/show the way

From *Manga Shorts*, p. 40

ふきのとう	*fukinotō*	butterbur flower stem
春	*haru*	spring (season)
特売	*tokubai*	sale
季節	*kisetsu*	season (*n.*)
感じる	*kanjiru*	feel/sense/notice (*v.*)
余裕	*yoyu*	leeway/margin
新人	*shinjin*	newcomer
かわいい	*kawaii*	cute
はっきりした	*hakkiri shita*	clear/clearly defined
花粉症	*kafunshō*	hay fever
社内報	*shanai-hō*	company newsletter
インタビュー	*intabyū*	interview (*n.*)
銀行	*ginkō*	bank (*n.*)
取締役	*torishimariyaku*	board member
明るい	*akarui*	bright/cheerful
活発な	*kappatsu na*	lively
企画	*kikaku*	plan/feature (*n.*)
㊙	*maruhi*	Top Secret
お花見	*o-hanami*	flower-viewing party
来週	*raishū*	next week
飲み会	*nomikai*	drinking party
教室	*kyōshitsu*	classroom
忘年会	*bōnenkai*	year-end party
力	*chikara*	strength/force
抜く	*nuku*	withdraw/pull out/release
アルバイト	*arubaito*	part-time work/worker
一日	*ichinichi*	one day
人事課	*jinji-ka*	personnel section
手伝う	*tetsudau*	help/assist
場所	*basho*	place/spot/site
デパート	*depāto*	department store
お湯	*o-yu*	hot water/bath
最高	*saikō*	the best/tops
おみやげ	*o-miyage*	gift/souvenir
パッとする	*pa-tto suru*	shine/stand out
灰皿	*haizara*	ashtray
湯のみ	*yunomi*	teacup
他に	*hoka ni*	besides/other than
付きあう	*tsukiau*	date/go with
ふたまたかける	*futamata kakeru*	two-time (*v.*)
違う	*chigau*	different/wrong
正確に	*seikaku ni*	accurately

From *Otoko wa Tsurai Yo*, p. 73

純情	*junjō*	pure/simple heart
理容店	*riyōten*	barbershop
手焼	*teyaki*	hand-roasted
暴力	*bōryoku*	violence
つまむ	*tsumamu*	pinch (*v.*)
笑う	*warau*	laugh (*v.*)
相手	*aite*	counterpart
よっぽどの	*yoppodo no*	considerable
物好き	*monozuki*	eccentric/curious
遅い	*osoi*	late
助ける	*tasukeru*	help/rescue/save

From *Basic Japanese*, p. 94

定年	*teinen*	retirement
恋人	*koibito*	lover/sweetheart
美人	*bijin*	beautiful woman
長生き	*nagaiki*	long life
幸せ	*shiawase*	happiness
腹が立つ	*hara ga tatsu*	get angry
やめる	*yameru*	quit/stop
あるく	*aruku*	walk (*v.*)
わく	*waku*	boil/bubble up
融資	*yūshi*	financing
失敗する	*shippai suru*	fail

The Vocabulary Summary is taken from material appearing in this issue of Mangajin. *It's not always possible to give the complete range of meanings for a word in this limited space, so our "definitions" are based on the usage of the word in a particular story.*

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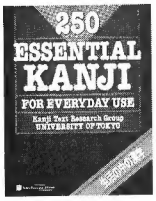

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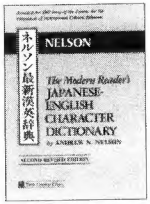

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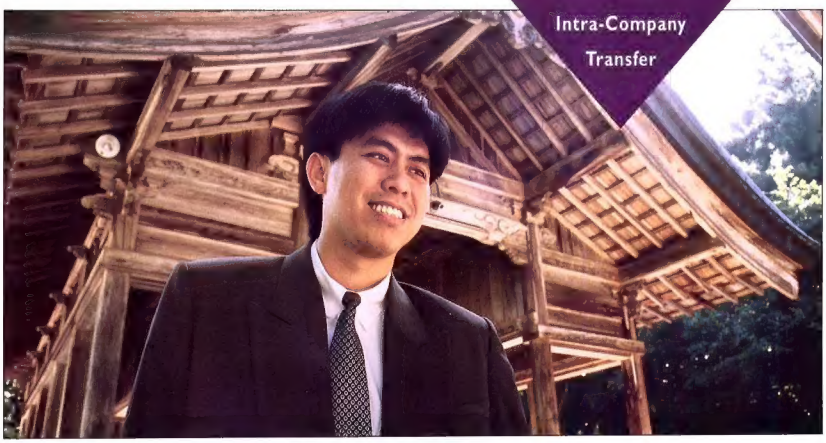

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